

# MAN

SOCIAL, MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL

BY

**PANDIT BIRESHWAR PANDE**

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## PREFACE.

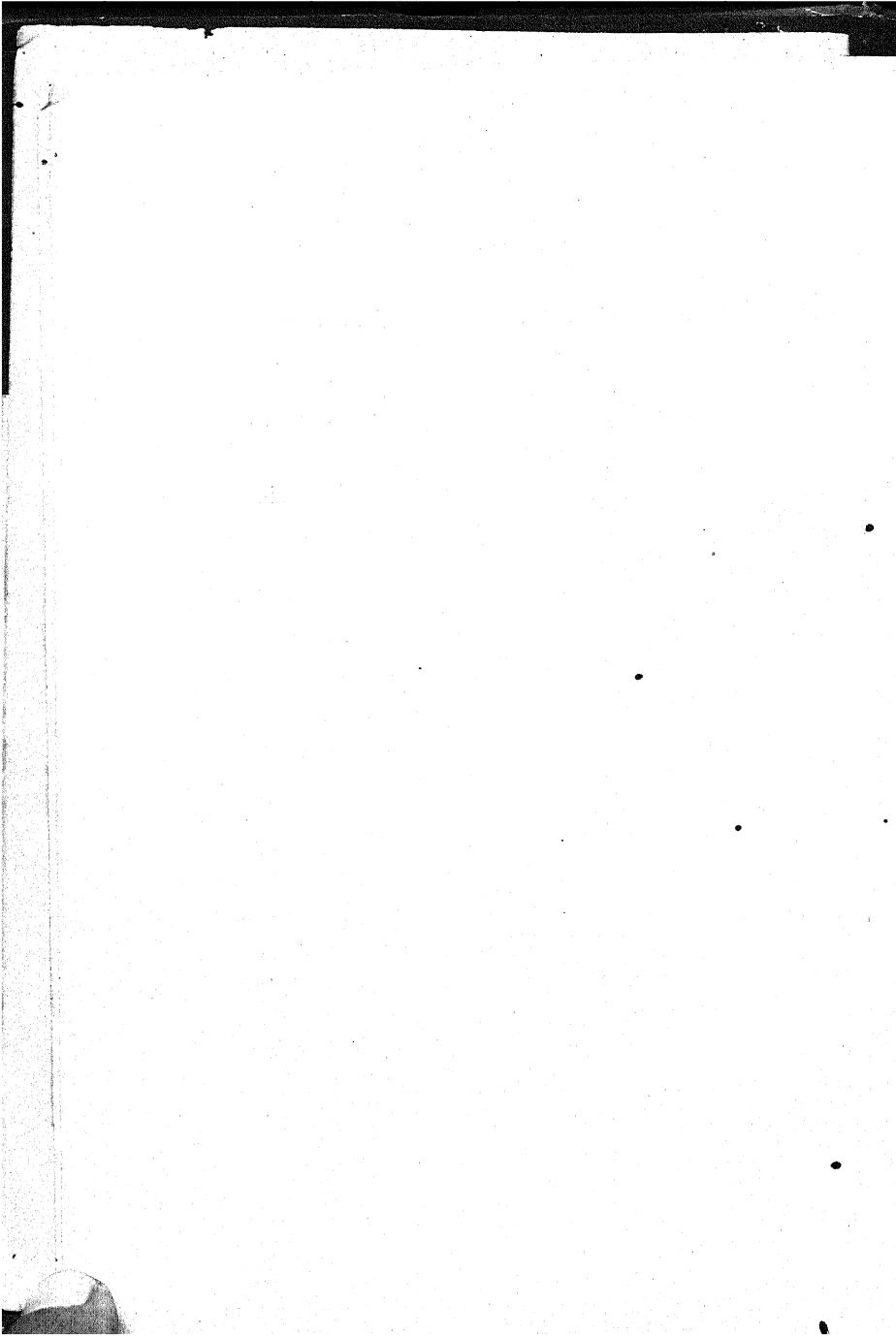
Only few words are needed to introduce the book to the reader. It is a free English rendering of my book in Bengali মানবতত্ত্ব published in the year 1884. My only excuse in presenting the same in an English garb is the repeated request of my friends.

In the treatment of the subject, no claim is made of any originality in the stand-point or view. I have tried to put in rational forms some of the conclusions of the Hindu Shastras, and if it helps, in these days of orthodoxy and authority on the one hand, and agnosticism and disbelief on the other, a healthy common-sense in dealing with the subjects, I shall consider that I have not striven in vain.

Owing to my continued ill-health due to advancing years, and to various other untoward circumstances, the get-up of the book leaves much to be desired. These, as well as the hurry with which it was seen through the press, have caused several unfortunate mistakes to creep in. Lastly, as one whose life's race is nearly run, I sincerely hope that the present-day generation will leniently judge the imperfect performance of an old man reared in the atmosphere of the old Hindu thought, in venturing to tackle with some of the most fundamental problems of human life.

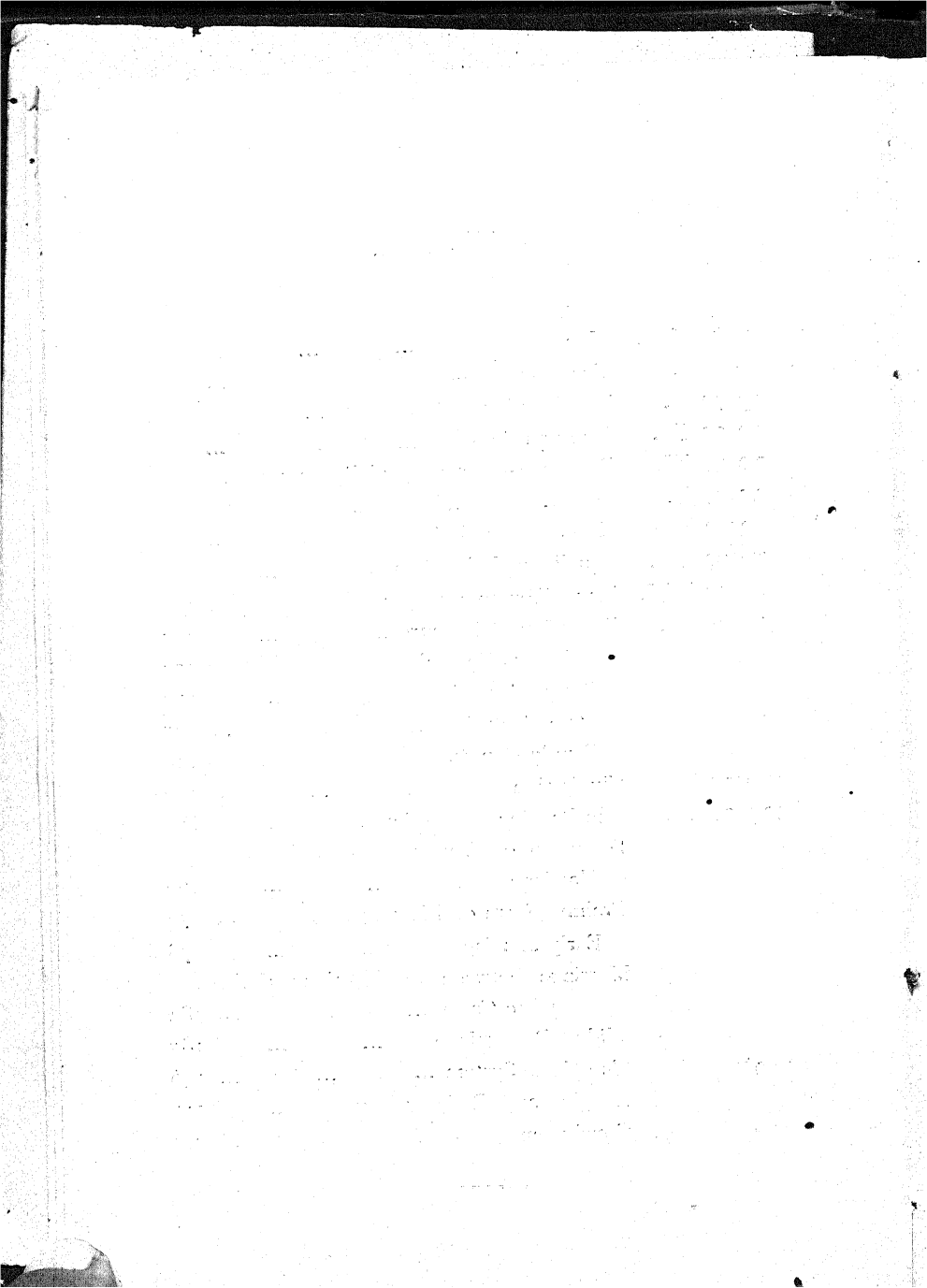
## THE AUTHOR.

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# CONTENTS.

	SUBJECT	PAGE
Introduction.	Man ... ..	1
Chapter I.	The Universe—Kosmos ... ..	6
Chapter II.	Manifestation and Creation ... ..	14
Chapter III.	Man and Soul ... ..	19
Chapter IV.	Existence—Prenatal and Postmortal ... ..	36
Chapter V.	God ... ..	46
Chapter VI.	Knowledge and Faith ... ..	75
Chapter VII.	Equality and Freedom ... ..	90
Chapter VIII.	Duty. How to ascertain it ... ..	103
Chapter IX.	Education and Control... ..	117
	- Religious Control ... ..	126
	Social Control ... ..	130
	State Control ... ..	135
	Family Control ... ..	138
Chapter X.	Civilisation ... ..	140
Chapter XI.	The Position of the Sexes ... ..	155
	Seclusion of Women ... ..	160
	Marriage ... ..	166
	Brahma Form of Marriage ... ..	172
	Early Marriage ... ..	178
	Marriage between the Members of the	
	same Caste ... ..	184
	Widow Remarriage ... ..	187
Chapter XII.	The Caste System ... ..	196
Chapter XIII.	Religion and Religious Duties ... ..	217
Chapter XIV.	Conclusion ... ..	241



# CORRIGENDA.

PAGE.	LINE	FOR	READ
14	4	the planet	the planets
22	17	offsprings	offspring
23	15	cause	causes
24	24	be mainspring	be the mainspring
25	6	forces	force
27	2	the animals	animals
28	5	peculiarities	peculiarities
33	25	lesson	lessen
36	10	soul	souls
49	27	then	than
53	10	led	fed
55	16	your	you
58	3	there	their
63	17	as	us
68	14	universe is	universe
68	21	of this	this
81	1	we must first know	first know.
82	7	rational	rational
85	21	falsehood	falsity
39	20	sphere	spheres.
102	2	o	—
102	3	नान्ततरं	नास्त्यन्तरं
102	15	from a affluent to a indigent	from affluent to indigent.
106	14	They	The children
106	20	panse	pause.
107	28	determines	determine.
108	8	were	are
115	16	is	in
116	26	the the	the

PAGE.	LINE	FOR	READ
117	2	his to duty	his duty
119	16	has got	got
121	15	know	known
123	14	it is not enough	is not enough
124	18	man is not	man has not
127	29	them	than
128	12	pristine	pristine.
137	20	Republics	Republic.
145	19	distroys	destroys
147	5	as consequence	as a consequence
155	11	pulpable	palpable.
161	6	others limbs	other limbs
162	3	ro	or
170	28	to be best object	to be the best object
171	21	and wife	and the wife
174	25	for otherwise	otherwise
177	11	expression their	expression of their
184	26	between of the	between the
191	20	bring about	brings about
207	13	confirm	conform.
211	7	starrations	starvation
213	22	to be fact	to be a fact
214	7	were exhausted	was exhausted
214	23	disastrons	disastrous.
217	2	an a sound	on a sound
224	2	individual	individuals.
229	21	deteriminate	determinate
240	25	Purituns	Puritans

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# MAN.

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## Introduction.

What is Man ? A being with two hands and two feet—this is what the term ordinarily signifies to us. A mighty monarch attired in his royal robes, the lord of his palace, is thus a man as also is the shrivelled beggar in his rags hardly knowing where to hide his head. A keen-witted Chânakya or a Richelieu comes under the same category with the veriest idiot. A Bhishma, an Arjuna, an Alexander or a Napoleon is thus classed with the coward who would not hesitate to save his skin at the expense of his country. Men of genius such as a Bhâbavuti, or a Kalidâsa, a Shakespeare, or a Newton—all have to take rank as man with the illiterate and superstitious rabble. A Frenchman or an Englishman with his Aryan features and refined modern culture will have, from this point of view, to stand by the side of the black and savage Negro, the perfumed and well-groomed beau by the foul-smelling street-sweeper. The appellation is the same, but what a world of difference separates the types !!! Placed side by side, the one appears as exalted as a heavenly god, while the other sinks below the level of the beast : the one hardly

seems worthy to touch even the shadow of the other. Can the filthy illiterate street-sweeper stand comparison with the diamond-decked, all-powerful ruler of men? Can he dare speak to him? How wide is the gulf between them! Should they both come under the same category, or should the application of the term "man" be restricted to one of them, and a fresh designation invented to indicate the other?

The question, the problem as to what constitutes man, cannot be answered before we have fully examined into the nature and destiny of man. If there be the same essential nature in all so-called human beings, if they are making for the same ultimate goal, why this difference between man and man? It is hard to imagine that a Homer or a Valmiki can have the same goal as a John Doe or a Richard Roe? Will such human-scourges as Nero and Tamerlane have the same and the ultimate end and goal as a Jesus, a Buddha or a Chaitanya? If that were so, what becomes of the difference between the good and the bad? Evolution would then be a meaningless tale.

If on the other hand there is any diversity in the ultimate end, how can we hold that the essential nature in them all, is the same?

These are questions of perennial interest to mankind, and ever since the dawn of intelligence, human thought has sought to unravel the mystery, although the practical outcome thereof all has been, we are afraid, almost *nil*. Thinkers have not been able to come to a unanimity of opinion regarding these points, nor is there



any possibility of their doing so. Some opine that the "Will of God brought man into being; that to serve God is his proper work; that the end of human existence is to attain final emancipation, be it in the form of a heavenly life or a nearness to the Divinity, either in space or in likeness of nature; that lives on this side of the grave are meant for work which again should be performed with a view to the attainment of bliss in the life which awaits us on the other side; that to work is a privilege for us all, and that the disparity in human circumstances, so notoriously glaring, is but the consequence of work done, of Karma either in this life or in lives gone by."

Others again maintain 'that men are all created equal by God who endowed them with freedom, but that it is abuse of the same freedom which has given birth to so much inequality and suffering in the world.' It is abundantly clear that an understanding of the nature and destiny of man involves as its necessary condition an enquiry into the ultimate problems of metaphysics, those relating to God and the creation and the existence of the soul before and beyond the present life. But before we go into these recondite questions, we must not lose sight of the fact that man does not constitute the whole of creation and that there would be no appreciable gap in it even though he were swept away from its bosom. Infinite are the forms of being manifested in this world, so it is only proper that we should devote some consideration to them before we proceed to our enquiries as to man.

Sense perception reveals to us a world of realities, some of which we designate as material objects while others are regarded as qualities of the same. It is generally believed that whatever exists must have been created by God with some particular end in view, and that there is nothing existent which has no purpose of its own behind it. Accordingly we postulate theories as to purpose even in cases where nature refuses to reveal the secret; so much so that even ferocious wild animals, and venomous snakes, nay pestilence and death itself are credited with being the unconscious agents of Nature's benevolent design. Why should we at all think in this way? Is it because we are afraid that it would be impertinence in us to suppose that Providence has willed into existence things which have no purpose to fulfil? We dare not credit God with a lack of purpose. But the question still remains as to what this purpose is which created objects are designed to bring out. You are a man. Your reply will be that the entire creation exists for your good; that the planets, the stars, the earth and the elements, nay even disease and death, every thing exists for the good of your race. But would it not sound equally cogent for an ape if it were to say that the entire created world including the human race was meant for the good of the ape-kind? Let us however concede the point to man. But does man know what ends he himself is intended to serve? It will not be proper for him to answer that men were created for the accomplishment of their mutual good, for that will not solve the question. For what good then does man himself exist

on the earth? Is man creation's all in all? Is he self created? Is he independent of the rest of the universe? Alas! the answer must be in the negative. How then can man claim that his case stands on a different and superior footing, subject as he is to the self-same conditions with the rest of the created world,—seeing that he has, as he stands at present, no control over those laws of creation and dissolution which sway the rest of mundane life. If it is purpose that has brought other creatures into being, how can man be an exception to the rule? If his coming into existence is fortuitous and devoid of purpose, why not theirs? If it is contended that man's existence is designed for the carrying out of some purpose of God, the answer does not suffice. For how can God who is all powerful and all perfect have any purpose of his own at all? Purpose indicates present imperfection.

If we must suppose that other creatures might with equal right claim that they too are moments in the unfoldment of the same divine purpose, by what right then can man lay claim to any preferential treatment? The power which enables him to lord it over the universe is not an acquisition of his own! How then can he be said to stand apart from the rest of the created universe? The problem being of so great a complexity, it behoves us to carry the question a step further back and to enquire into the origin of the universe which man inhabits, for we can hope to understand man only through his environments.

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## CHAPTER I.

### The Universe—Kosmos.

The human mind aspires to rise to the First Cause, the *Beginning* of the universe, but is it endowed with the powers necessary for the purpose? Have we ever known the First Cause of any thing to justify such an aspiration. If not, why then do we long to deal with the First Cause of the universe? It is the characteristic of the human mind to seek for the origin and cause of all things. It is an inherent tendency of the human mind to inquire into the beginnings of things. But have we ever known the beginning of anything? Man always sees one phenomenon antecedent to another phenomenon. This he terms the "cause" of the subsequent event. So that he has learnt to associate every phenomenon with a "cause." But, what is the "first cause" of a thing? Actuated by the tendency referred to, man seeks to unravel the mystery of this—the first cause or condition of things. Should we not understand by it the condition of a thing before which nothing of that thing existed? If we mean what we say, have we ever known anything like that? Have we ever seen the first cause or the first condition of any thing? Does any of the events which we speak of cause the origin of things? Do you call the state at the period when you were ushered into this worldly existence, your origin? It can never be. For before that you existed in your

mother's womb ; even before that if you push your enquiry further, you will find that you had existed in a subtle and undifferentiated form in the bodies of your parents, and you were in still subtler forms of existence in the animal or vegetable matter which as nourishment supplied the life and blood of the parents and in organic or inorganic matter wherefrom these food materials were built up. As you go on with this process of enquiry your previous states will appear to be infinite and never shall you find out your beginning. So that what you call your origin ( उत्पत्ति ) is not your beginning, but merely a change of conditions—a transition from state to state. You might not have had a body before this, but all the materials that go to form your body existed. You may say cloud is the cause of rains, but clouds come from the vapours and vapours from water. So you begin and end with water. All the materials of your body shall after your death return to the conditions in which they previously existed. That is why the Scriptures (*Shashtras*) speak of physical death as the resolution of the composite structure, which we call the physical body, into the five component elements thereof (earth, water, fire, air and space). You may remember in this connection the familiar puzzle of the evolution of a tree from the seed and *vice versa*, where it is difficult to determine which is the cause and which the effect. In this view nothing will appear to you capable of being traced to a beginning. The origin and destruction of things such as you see around you, are not really the origin and destruction of anything but only changes of states.

Just as earth is transformed into a pot, gold into ornaments, cotton into cloth, so are the material elements transformed into the human body even as vapour transforms itself into rain.

All things are thus being constantly transmuted from one state to another ; and it is only these different transformations that we speak of as the origin or beginning of things. One of such changes is styled the origin of a thing, which is certainly so with regard to the thing in the particular condition only. The real beginning is the first condition of a thing before which nothing of that thing existed. But we have never seen that anything comes out of nothing. It is impossible for us to realise it even in imagination. Human knowledge (ज्ञान) is based principally on experience. It is apparent that millions of zeros added together can never make 'one' ; nor 'one' divided into million parts be reduced to a zero. So the Gita says :—

नासतो विद्यते भावी नाभावी विद्यते सतः

"The unreal hath no being ; the real never ceaseth to be."

So that to say that in the beginning there was nothing, yet the universe has come to exist ; or that the universe now exists but will cease to be hereafter, leaving nothing behind it is not only against the canons of sound logic but beyond human conception. Perhaps to meet this difficulty, the Naiyayikas (the Logician-philosophers of ancient India) have said that

the atoms are indestructible and immutable. They have held that the universe springs into existence from a concourse of these atoms which continue to remain the same after its dissolution.

It may be contended that though a 'something' never comes out of a 'nothing' and a 'something' is never reduced to a 'nothing,' that when there was nothing in the universe, God was, and when the universe will cease to exist God will exist as ever, and that from that God the universe has come to exist.

But the question is ;—Does God bear the same relation to the universe which comes out of His Being, as the vapour does to the water which it produces, and the seed to the tree which it germinates? If so, God must be called the condition precedent (पूर्वावस्था) of the universe, and there ought to be a cause or prior condition (पूर्वावस्था) of God as well.

But people who hold this view do not say so. Their view is that God is entirely separate from His universe, and His relation to it is much higher than, though analogous to the relation of the potmaker to his pot, or of the goldsmith to the ornaments he makes. They hold that in the beginning there was nothing. Only God, without end and without beginning, existed. God willed to manifest the universe and from that will sprang the universe into manifestation. But how far does this stand to reason? How far is it possible for the activities (कार्य) of a Being, ever-existent, to come into existence at a definite point of time only? However far back you might throw the time of the origin of the universe, it is very far

short of Eternity. That God must have been sitting idle for a long period and began work all on a sudden at a certain moment is very unreasonable. To say that the will of God is the cause of manifestation, and that so long as there was not in Him the will to manifest, there was no universe, and that the universe came to exist as soon as there was the will, is no satisfactory solution. For the question still would remain as to why the will was absent for such a length of time, and why all on a sudden arose that will? This objection refutes the very argument upon which such people base their subtle conclusion; for their chief argument is that there can be nothing without a cause,—so that the universe must have its cause, and that we have this cause in the will of God. But when they distinctly lay down the bold dictum that nothing is uncaused, what cause do they assign to this will of God? God existed through all Eternity but He had no will, why then did it suddenly spring up? Their theory therefore falls to the ground, unless they can assign a cause to this will.

Human knowledge has no finality. Having seen that every phenomenon is preceded by another, these thinkers have come to the irresistible conclusion that there can be no effect without a cause. But the only logical conclusion possible therefrom, and the practical effect of the application of this principle, would lead them on to an infinite regression of causes, without the hope even of reaching a finality in things, and thus they fall back at last upon an Uncaused Cause in whose infinite knowledge they find the halting place for their



thought. But if they hold the universe to be without beginning or end, then neither are their arguments weakened, nor have they got to take the help of imagination to maintain their unsafe and untenable position.

When in fact we cannot find the beginning of anything, why should we not hold that the universe is beginningless? Now as we proceed to consider the question from another point, no doubt will remain with regard to the "Beginninglessness" of the universe. Let us see whether the things we know of in the universe are in fact limited or unlimited. If they are limited, infinite knowledge is impossible to us; if on the other hand they are infinite, finite knowledge is not in our line. Let us pause and consider the matter;—our conceptions of the universe are reducible into four categories or modes of thought:—Substance, Substratum, Time and Activity. Perhaps we know no other. Substratum is that in which a thing remains or inheres: that which remains is called the Substance: the expression of the forces or attributes of the substance is called its Activity and the duration of activity is called Time. The receptacle of milk is the pot, of the pot is the earth, but what is the substratum of the Earth?

On further consideration it will be found that the space which we call the empty Void is the Substratum of the Earth. Space is the Substratum of the Worlds, so that by substance we mean anything in the universe which exists in space. This 'Void,' this mighty receptacle of all the worlds we call 'nothing'; but are we sure that it is really nothing? How can we say that the substratum

of this mighty universe is nothing? All that we can say is that it is made up of materials which are "super-sensuous." Because the universe consists of substratum and the substances it contains—empty space and the world within it. If in reality space is nothing, then the universe cannot be regarded as *one*, for there is space intervening between the different planets and the satellites. We cannot call a thing one and integral unless its different parts are connected together or correlated with each other and the whole. So if the intervening space (Akasha) be nothing the universe cannot be treated as one, because the planets and the satellites which do not touch each other are quite distinct and separate.

That is why the Aryan Sages have regarded Space (Akasha) as a material substance "मौलिक पदार्थ" and the space above the Earth has been termed the seven atmospheres (आवृह, प्रवृह, संवृह and so on). The Western scientists of the present day recognise the existence of a subtle imponderable fluid called ether. Any way there is no doubt as to the space within the universe being Infinite. Now have we ever known any container or *upadhi* without the things contained? How is space then to be regarded as a vacuum. Space then which is the substratum must have substances within it as the receptacle of the worlds. Space being infinite, the universe it contains must necessarily be infinite. Thus the universe has no limits, it is Infinite. The astronomers to a certain extent recognise this when they say that certain planets are so far off that their light has not yet reached the earth at all

although light travels at the rate of  $96000 \times 2$  miles per second.

The expression of the forces and attributes of objects is called their Activity. The magnet attracts iron, *i.e.*, manifests its power of attracting iron. Man walks *i.e.*, manifests his power of walking. The duration of the activity is Time. It may also be termed the container of the effects ( *कार्य* ). Just as the extension of a thing is the amount of space it occupies, so the duration of activity or the manifestation of the power of an object is its period of existence. No doubt exists with regard to Time being eternal (beginningless and endless). If Time is endless why should not the phenomena existing in it be endless as well? The substratum of activities which we call Time must be and is beginningless and endless. In point of duration, the universe is therefore Infinite. Therefore anything that we know regarding the universe is necessarily infinite, and as such the knowledge of the beginninglessness of the universe is natural to us. The finite shape and form, origin and destruction of things are not their real limit, origin or end, as the example of water and vapour illustrates. The universe never came to exist, it is ever uncreate nor will it ever cease to be. It exists in all eternity and has no beginning nor end.

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## CHAPTER II.

### Manifestation and Creation.

Has the universe as Infinite, no origin, no dissolution, no progress, no retrogression? Does the universe remain in the same condition in all ages? Were the earth, the moon, the sun, the planet and the stars in the same condition in the past as now and shall they all remain so throughout in future? That is not so, because our experience belies the changelessness of things in the universe. The universe cannot remain in the self-same condition for ever: the plains become hills, and hills become plains: forests are converted into deserts and deserts into forests: lands give place to water and water to lands: great cities are turned into desolate wastes, and wild unfrequented tracts are converted into flourishing business centres: Look to the Indo-Aryans, who in pre-historic times held the torch light of civilisation amidst the darkness of barbarism all around, and see them now. From what heights to what depths fallen! Look again to the European races emerging in the more recent times from the oblivion of almost barbaric existence wield vast and world-wide empires. In one word "the old order changeth giving place to the new." This is the law of Nature. Not one of the individuals who happened to live on the face of this earth a century ago is living now, and of the multitudes of individuals now living, not one would be found here a century hence. Every one will die and yet the existence of mankind shall

not be blotted out. So also although every thing in the universe perishes, the universe continues to be.

Like the birth and death of man everything in the universe has its origin and dissolution. But birth and death, origin and dissolution are nothing but changes of states. The beginningless universe is assuming a new form at every moment. The earth, the stars and the sun did not exist always nor will they exist for ever? Just at a certain point of time a particular individual may not exist, but in order that he may exist at any time in future his predecessors must exist, so perhaps the earth did not exist, but the materials that go to form it did. Before the present sun and stars there were others. As the death of individuals does not affect the continuous existence of humanity as a whole, so the planets, the stars and the world, everything in fact, will one after the other disappear giving place to new ones, and yet the universe will remain. Therefore although the universe is beginningless and infinite, the planets, the stars, the worlds, in fact all things in it are being born and destroyed.

The current scientific theory regarding the origin of this earth is that formerly the earth existed in a nebulous state, and by gradual condensation has assumed its present form. In the first stages, only an outer crust was formed by condensation, but gradually such layers or crusts multiplied. In course of time, vegetables, reptiles, fishes, birds and animals and lastly man appeared on that hardened surface. Man in his turn is gradually being civilised from his primitive savage existence. But the question is, where did this mass of nebula which

solidified into the present earth come from? Is it not the product of disintegration of a previous world? As vapour is produced from water and water from vapour, as the seed germinates and grows into the tree and the latter in its turn yields the seed, so did the Earth come from the nebulous vapours which were the result of the dissolution of a previous Earth. Just as man has his birth, growth, decay and lastly death, so has the earth her childhood (wildness), her youth (civilisation), her old age (decline), and death (dissolution). This rule runs right through every thing in the universe. Formerly man was wild and is gradually getting civilised now and when he will reach the climax of his progress, he too shall have his fall. After that, beings higher than man may come to inhabit the face of the Earth. The dissolution of the Earth will come when she has reached the acme of her development, and she will ultimately be reduced to vapours, or homogenous nebulous matter, and future earths may arise therefrom.

According to the Western Scriptures the age of the world has been put down to 6000 years only. This is against both science and reason. In this respect, the theory of the Indo-Aryans as set-forth in the Puranas is very satisfactory. They take a *kalpa* to be 320,000,000 years. One such *kalpa* is the length of one day of Brahma and an equal period the length of his night. During the night of Brahma the worlds go into dissolution (*laya*) and during the day there is the activity of creation again. "The manifested universes of name and form stream forth at the coming of day ; at the

coming of night they dissolve." So in Yoga Vasistha also (sl lxxxvi 7-8.) Brahma is thus addressed : "Thereafter, Thou, O Lord, intent on preserving the reign of night, fixed within the Self, having indrawn that order of things.....Today, Thou hast awakened and art most joyfully desirous of again throwing out the universe in mighty gradations." These nights and days are the "nights and days of Brahma, the inbreathing and outbreathing of the One Existence." Of the present *kalpa* about 160,000,000 years are past. The present Brahma is aged 60 years on a calculation of His days by the above standard. Before the present Brahma there was another, and after Him will come another too, and so on and on. Manu Says :

आसीदिदन्तमीभूतमप्रज्ञातमलक्ष्यम् ।

अप्रतर्कमविज्ञेय प्रसूतमिव सर्व्वतः ॥

ततः स्वयम्भूभृगवानव्यक्तो व्यञ्जयन्निदम् ।

महाभूवादिश्चौजाः प्रादुरासीत्तमोनुदः ॥

Before creation the material base of the universe existed in a state of chaos—undetermined and unknown. The Lord Sayambhu—the self-manifesting Brahma, manifested them by drinking off the waters of Darkness and became manifest Himself. Thus have the Indo-Aryan sages clearly admitted the beginninglessness and endlessness of the universe, and anticipated our arguments so long ago.

In fact, the universe is composed of what they call the five elements. It has no growth nor decay from

without ; but the attraction and repulsion of these five elements give rise to various things. It is the combination of these elements that gives rise to everything we find in the universe, from the tiny speck of dust to man—noblest of the creations. As the difference in the properties of two chemical elements produces by their combination different results, so these primordial elements in combining in different ways give rise to various concrete things. The ultimate constituent of all things from man to a speck of dust is thus the same. Therefore, although the universe is in its constituent elements beginningless and endless, the earth has its origin and growth, decay and dissolution.

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## CHAPTER III.

### Man and the Soul.

The ultimate constituents of man and a vesicle of water being thus the same, why should man be regarded as the highest of creations? We do not know of the beings that inhabit the other planets, the stars, the sun &c. But of those that live, move and have their being on the face of this earth, man is decidedly the highest. The powers of man are wonderful indeed. His initiation and pluck startle us even in our imagination. If birth and death can be controlled by the will of man he would well be styled the creator, preserver and destroyer of the earth—the all-in-all on this earth. The other animals do not possess even a millionth part of the powers wielded by man. How can it then be said that the same elements go to form man and the other animals?

Unable to fathom the depth of this mystery, many have postulated the existence of a soul beyond speech and mind. They say that the activities of man are solely due to the energies of this soul, and that no other thing except the soul has the power of initiation. Matter (जड़ पदार्थ) is dead and devoid of activity (motion). All the attributes that go to differentiate man from matter belong to the soul. But what is the soul? What is the inherent attribute of

this *atma* ? It is said that things inanimate (matter) and living (conscious) are the only categories of existence. That which is capable of being felt or perceived by the senses is matter ( *जड़ पदार्थ* ) ; and that which is not capable of being cognised by the senses, that by the powers of which man performs all actions, that which leads man to act is consciousness ( *चैतन्य* ). These conscious units are parts of God created by Him at a specific point of time. According to this definition, air and even imponderable ether are included in the category of matter. Ether is material although beyond the range of our senses. The atoms have shape, extension, relative position in space and other attributes ; and we can therefore feel their existence and form an idea thereof. On the other hand the soul has no extension and weight. It possesses no attributes which can be cognised by our senses. How can it then be an object of consciousness, of knowledge ? That which is not capable of being sensed is never within the range of our consciousness and is even difficult to imagine. But the only tangible ground on which we can base the hypothesis of the existence of a formless soul lies in the analogy of the air which we feel but do not see. However there is no doubt about the fact that we cannot form any idea about the soul as an object of knowledge. That which cannot be thought of can never be known and therefore cannot be regarded as existent or true.

Now let us see if the end which the propounders of an unknowable soul, special for each body, have in view in putting the theory forward, is being served thereby.

Does the theory, that matter being inactive there can be no activity (motion) without the conscious soul, hold good in all cases? Do the animals, the birds, the insects, the trees, and the creepers, all possess souls (*Atma*) or is man alone specially favoured with this endowment? If it is man's special heritage from which the animals and the vegetables have been deprived, and conceding that matter has no activity, how do they perform the various activities connected with will and desire, love and hate like the conscious man?

At times one is surprised at the intelligent actions of instinct or skill of the lower animals. How do they act thus? The difference between man and the other animals lies chiefly in this: that while humanity as a race is progressing, the inferior animals are more or less stationary. This reduces the difference, if any, between consciousness and matter very considerably. Is the measure of difference between soul and matter only this much? If you say that the vegetables and animals are all endowed with souls, why then is there so much difference between them? Why have the inferior animals and vegetables no self-consciousness? Why does not the soul act in the same way in the bodies of the inferior animals as in man?

Further, has the individual soul any inherent connection with matter, or is it totally independent of it? Is the soul born or launched out into existence at the moment when the body is conceived in the mother's womb, or has it a fixed place of abode whence it comes to secure its place in the body of man just at the moment

of his birth, or does it do so at some later period? If the soul is correlated to matter, what is then the differentia? If the soul is distinct and separate, the question arises, where does the soul remain? How many souls exist? What particular soul is meant to enter into a particular body? What is the rule that guides this process and how and at what period does the soul enter into the material body?

It is clear that the bodies of animals have their origin in the bodies of their parents. At what moment then, does the soul enter the material body? Are the worms that we sometimes find in certain fruits and in putrid matter endowed with souls? If so, at what time, does the soul get into them? If the soul has an indissoluble connection with the products of the human body, why then are not animals born at all times? Why is there no offsprings of barren parents? If the soul is the cause of making man what he is, if it is the fountain-head of all knowledge and wisdom, if it is at the root of the powers of thinking, why then do not all men possess the same measure of the human faculties, and the same portion of wisdom, knowledge and powers of thinking? If all men have souls, and if the soul is the cause of intelligence, why is one weak, and another strong, one a fool and another intelligent, one good and another bad, one modest and another conceited, one thoughtful and another a simpleton? If the independent soul takes possession of the body at the time of birth, why does not the child become wise as soon as it is born? If the soul be perfect in itself, why is there no sight without the eyes, no

hearing without the ears, and no life without the circulation of blood ?

It may be said in reply that though these activities are of the soul, it has to work with the help of the matter—the body, the organs and the senses, so that the work varies with the nature of these bodies and organs. Just as a sharp weapon facilitates the work of cutting and a blunt one retards it, so the soul has got to work with the instruments it finds in the body ; and therefore it cannot see without the eye nor hear without the ear : therefore is it that the child is not so intelligent as the man, because there are no fit and developed organs in its body for the acquisition and manifestation of intelligence. If so, it is clearly conceded that material forces are the cause of the activities of the soul and likewise the reason of its limitations.

It is said that excepting the soul, every thing in the individual is the product of matter, and that matter has no activity. How then does matter help the individual to perform the functions of seeing and hearing, action and thinking ? How again does it become a hindrance to its activities ? A thing that is inert cannot perform any activity ; nor can it hinder that of another. Physical science has proved it clearly : and hence this theory is not at all convincing. If material forces are the cause of all activities, what then does the soul do ? When you say that the differences in wisdom, love, hate, conscience and thinking of man, are due to his constitution and temperament, and admit that these are due to

material forces, do you not admit thereby that matter is the generator and the matrix of all functions? If so, what function has the soul to perform? If I ask you what is it that is born, you must answer 'the body'. What is it that takes the food? The mouth and the stomach. What is it that thinks? The mind; and so on. Are all these faculties born of matter, or are they the activities of a conscious yet alien soul?

If you maintain them to be the activities of the soul as an independent entity you belie the position you took up in explaining the difference in the quality of these activities in the cases of different individuals. If on the other hand, you regard them to be the products of matter, then conscience, thought, religious instincts, and in fact all the distinctive human virtues for the explanation of which the existence of a conscious soul was postulated are admitted to be material. If you posit the existence of conscious forces in matter, where then is the necessity for believing in an independent soul? But it may be said that although the activities of individuals are due to the characteristic properties of the material body, the soul impels it to activity and is responsible for the results. But if the independent soul is held to be main-spring of all actions and responsible for the results, why then does not the soul which is the same in all men move and act on them similarly? Why are some people engaged in good and others in evil actions; some in giving and others in taking, some in fighting and others in peace-making? If the constituents of the body be the cause of this also, then

the need for postulating the soul is gone. If in reply it is said, that all souls are not equal and that the individuals act according to the kind of soul that vitalises the bodies, we must necessarily come to the inevitable conclusion that soul is nothing else than material forces in another name. In fact the reason for propounding the theory of an independent soul as distinct from the body lies in the apparent necessity of explaining the activities in animals, and the inactivity of • matter.

Nothing in the universe is inactive or actionless. The objects that we regard as inactive and lifeless are not really so ; because every physical atom attracts every other of its kind *i. e.* gives out force to bring them to itself. Every object has its affinity with kindred things. Similarly every object has others antagonistic or opposite in nature and activities to it, *i. e.* things which are, as it were, not congenial to it, or things which it does not like. Magnet attracts iron as the desired object, but oil can never mix with water. Acids and alkalis when mixed together generate heat and energy. All these are of matter ; but every one of them has motion and activity. Not only is it so, but careful manipulation of material objects and forces may produce activities which are hardly less wonderful than conscious actions. How wonderfully does the clock indicate time ? One is surprised to think of the wonderful work done by steam engines ; electricity carries the news from one corner of the world to another almost in the twinkling of an eye. The photographic apparatus would catch and record the most

faithful likeness in a moment. The telephone, the microphone and the phonograph do work which is beyond the conscious powers of ordinary humanity. When such wonderful things as these are obtainable from the combination of material forces alone, matter can never be said to be inactive. But then the objection may arise that the activities of material objects are uniform in character,—that in fact such instruments can only repeat in the selfsame order the one and the same series of activities or phenomena they are meant to do, and that no change in the nature of such actions or in the sequence of actions, no change or initiation is possible with regard to these; that a physical instrument however complex does not display any will or desire and does not initiate new activities allied to the activities of conscious beings. These latter do not follow and are not limited to a definite order: their activities are according to will and desire. I believe this is a mistake. On closer thinking, it appears that neither the vegetables nor the animals have any independent will. If they had any, certainly they would have exercised it, and would not have willed in the selfsame way for ever from the beginnings of things. All trees germinate and fructify with a regularity which is hardly surpassed by the clock. Unless special causes intervene, there is no break or change in the order of their origin, growth or decay. Similarly do living beings perform habitual actions in a regular order *viz.*, eating, and drinking, sleeping and procreating. The tiger and lion of this day, do not differ in these respects from their predecessors of thou-



sands of years ago. What is the cause of this? Does it not clearly prove that the animals and vegetables like physical instruments depend on and are bound to act according to, the definite character of their constituents? If a soul apart from matter and its energies were the cause of will, then it is only reasonable for us to expect that sometime or other it would show its independent will by causing a break in the clock-like regularity in its actions.

- On a careful examination, it would appear that all human activities—his birth, and infancy, his youth and old age—follow a fixed order with mechanical regularity. Why then, it may be asked, does not man act with the uniformity and certainty of a machine? The chief reason is to be sought therefor in the variety of objects which can appeal to man's consciousness and in fact draw out his activities under the guiding principles of attraction and repulsion. His activities and emotions are prompted and produced by either of these. Love, affection, devotion are all based on attraction. Indifference is another name for repulsion; on which also is based fear, and hatred. The differences in the character and constitution of individual men arise out of the difference in quantity and the order of distribution of the constituent materials or elements.

*Buddhi* or the principle of receptivity in man, his intelligence, his conscience and memory—in fact the distinctive human qualities are the products of the constituent elements of his nature. So it is said that the blackness of the charcoal will take no

other hue and continue ever to be black, meaning that nature does not change in man even at death. As the magnet and its properties, fire and its heat are indissolubly wedded together, so also human character retains its peculiarities right up to the end. This is why an intelligent man never becomes a fool, nor does a fool ever become intelligent; good never becomes bad; bad never is good. If man had any will independent of the limitations of matter of his body, then this would not have been the case. Then the weak and the decrepit wishing to be strong would have become so even for a moment. The wrathful would then change into the forgiving, the haughty into the modest, the fool into the intelligent, and the cruel into the kind.

It is sometimes seen that man renounces his former character and changes his nature; but this is due to a different cause with which we shall deal in the chapter on "Knowledge and Education".

Just as a steel weapon becomes sharp by grinding and blunt by disuse, so a faculty becomes sharp by education, and dull for want of it. But education fails to induce a quality which was not already there. Though wood can be sharpened only to a certain extent, but it can never be done to the same extent and subserve the same purpose as iron. An average man would never make a Shakespeare with even a thousand years of training. Kalidasa would have been a poet without any education, and education served only to chasten his natural gifts. Yudisthira and Socrates would have been religious, even if they had no education to enlighten them.

This in fact is the reason why in the economy of human development, a secondary place is assigned to Art, and it is said that the only vocation of Art is to imitate Nature. Man, like a real poet, is born and never made.

Has man then no will, no power of choice? It is not meant from what we have said that man has no will whatsoever, but that the will of man is not the result of a consciousness distinct or separate from and independent of the material body; it is on the contrary derived from it. Will is but another name for the force of attraction exerted by the elements in the body to come into contact with those outside, for the energy tending to unite man with his outer surroundings; and as such it is regulated and controlled by the powers of attraction and repulsion contained in the constituents of the particular body referred to before. People like to have outer things as have kinship with their nature; and that is why the tastes of people differ so much. One is greedy and self-indulgent, another abstemious, one loves play, another work. In fact what is painful to one is often positively pleasurable to another. If, however, the will had belonged or appertained to a consciousness separate from and independent of the physical body, this would not have been so. In that case mankind would invariably have desired and determined such actions only as would make for real happiness.

The point in question would be made clear if we study carefully the peculiarities of the animal nature in its evolution from the lowest vegetable forms to the

highly evolved man. Thus though the difference between man and the vegetable kingdom appears at the first sight to be so great, it sinks into insignificance when the gradual unfoldment of faculties is studied from the point of view of sequential evolution. These differences are due to the character and constitution of the component materials. The difference between the vegetable and the unicellular amœba and lower lives, between those micro-organisms, and the highly evolved man, and nay, the difference between man and man is due to a difference in the quantity and distribution of the body-materials. It is this arrangement and distribution of the constituents, that the difference between civilised men, between *Diggaja*, the illiterate Brahmin in *Durgeshnandini*, and *Arjyavattava*, between *Buddha* and *Vyasa* is due to. It is on account of this difference also that all objects are not equally pleasurable or useful to all. What kills one, saves another. In fact even the excretions of the human organism go to nourish certain animals lower down in the scale of evolution. The earth which because of the absence of the flesh-making materials affords no nourishment to the human body, goes to feed many a lower forms of life. The poisons which are fatal to man go to sustain life in others. Carbonic acid gas which is thrown out by and is so injurious to the human organism is the very life of the plants and the vegetable kingdom, without which they cannot live for a moment. Why should not there be an uniformity in the effects of similar things? All these differences are due to differences in the constitution of

the several organisms, accounting also for the greater discrepancies in their respective activities.

If in this way all human activities can be traced to properties inherent in matter, where then is the necessity for postulating the existence of a separate and independent self? Perhaps those that believe in the existence of the self will say, that even if it be conceded that everything else is due to the energies of matter, consciousness and intelligence can in no sense be due to them. The clock knows not that it gives correct time to the world, it never feels any pain when broken to pieces. But whatever man does he feels, and he acts consciously and understands the meaning of his actions. He can feel pleasure or pain from the very first moment of his birth, and the phenomena of consciousness cannot be explained with the help of material objects and forces devoid of consciousness. But how do you know that material objects do not feel? You cannot infer that material objects feel no pleasure or pain from the mere fact of their manifesting no external signs of the feelings for any length of time: for then on exactly the same grounds you can infer that small insects like the ants do not feel and have no such feelings and can not ordinarily give vent to their inner states by sounds. You might, but for the invention of the microphone, have said that the ant has no language for expressing its feelings. The ant is a small and tiny insect: you can not ordinarily hear its cries. But you can infer that it feels pleasure and pain by interpreting its activities. When a branch is lopped off a tree, it does

not utter any cries audible to us, nor is there any apparent movement of its limbs initiated from within ; but is it therefore to be inferred that the tree does not feel pain in the process of cutting ? If not, why is there exudation from the maimed part. and why is it that the part becomes subsequently healed up, and how is it again that the whole tree languishes and dies if particular vital parts thereof are injured ? If the power of feeling, of sentiency is denied to the tree, how shall we explain the tendency of the roots always to avoid harder soils and to drive into softer ? So we can safely conclude that the vegetables feel. But when we find so much difficulty in understanding the feelings of the vegetable kingdom, how can we expect to understand the workings of consciousness in the still lower orders of nature in the apparently inert matter ? We can only infer from careful observation that there too consciousness is at work.

Let us first discuss the psychology of pleasure and pain. It has already been shown that will and desire are but evolved and developed modes of the powers of attraction. Pleasure is the concomittant of a desire satisfied ; and pain is the concomittant of an unsatisfied longing. Does not the magnet show signs such as can be interpreted as the expression of pleasure when it is near the iron, and does it not show the signs of depression when taken away from it ? How then could we say that matter has no capacity to feel and does not feel ? Knowledge is not inborn to man as will be apparent from the Chapter on Knowledge and Faith. Our explanation holds good even though all objects have not the same

capacities for acquiring knowledge. If every object had all these powers, there could have been no graduated scale of evolution or manifestation ; and man would have not been considered the highest point of evolution. Man's superiority is due to his possession of the largest number of organs having different and varied functions. None of the lower animals have them to the same extent and therefore can not express life as fully as man. These organs and their diverse functions make it possible for man to acquire, store up and accumulate knowledge. His superior powers are not due to the presence of an independent and extraneous consciousness. Similarly the incapacity of the lower animals to manifest these powers to the same extent as man is due not to the absence of a conscious principle in them but to their possession of a fewer number of capacities and organs.

One thing will make this clear beyond the necessity of further discussion. What objection can any one possibly have if we say that matter has in it the potency or possibility of life and consciousness, or that the two are always intimately and indissolubly associated? If God be the source of all powers, is he incapable of endowing matter with life and consciousness? Does not the impregnation of matter with life enhance His glory, rather than lessen it? If so, what wrong is there if we hold that matter has consciousness? Why should we have any reason to doubt this, when we see the wonderful potentialities of matter as shown in the marvels of photography and phonography, of the chronometer and the piano? What possible objection therefore can

there be if matter be held to be endowed with consciousness and life?

The difficulty has arisen from our so defining matter as to put it in an artificial antithesis and opposition to consciousness and from our inability to see in matter the promise and potency of life and consciousness. As a matter of fact, matter can never be dissociated from consciousness: and as it took humanity a long time to discover the forces of attraction and repulsion, the universal law of gravitation, some great mind in some future time will surely demonstrate the existence of life and consciousness in matter.\* All doubts will be cleared and difficulties removed if we could understand the nature of matter and consciousness. Consciousness is the soul and matter is the body; and the difference between them is that—the one is the inner life and the other is its outer manifestation owing its existence to the life. The realisation of the relationship between matter and consciousness will help us on to an understanding of our relationship with God.

The concepts underlying consciousness are almost the same as their underlying energy, power or *Shakhti*. Consciousness is the primal energy from which every thing has sprung. It is the cause of all creation and as such has been indicated by the Hindu sages as the Devi, The Mother, the Goddess Kali—the one primal Energy-Consciousness.

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\* It is a matter of great pleasure that our expectations have been fulfilled and the hypotheses suggested clearly proved by the recent scientific researches of Prof. J. C. Bose.



We should like to conclude this chapter by reiterating that in so far as the existence of an extraneous and independent consciousness is unknowable, and its independent activity incapable of being realised by us, and that since neither our conception of God or His glory nor that of consciousness is in any way narrowed or lowered down by the acceptance of the theory here suggested of the intimate connection or relation between matter and consciousness, there is no harm done if we hold that matter and consciousness are indissolubly wedded together in the universe. The Vedas with no halting voice speak of the "One without a Second" and the Shastras invariably teach that the Universal Self veiled in Maya is the individualised self for the purposes of manifestation. Creation is thus the result of the correlation of matter and consciousness as the aspects of a Secondless Whole, so that in the universe, pure matter or pure consciousness is an utter impossibility.

There is no pure consciousness except the Spotless Brahman. So the Vedas say : Brahman is the Supreme Self while the soul within the Jiva form is the individualised self enveloped in matter. :A detailed exposition of this would however require a separate volume and is quite out of the scope of our present work.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### Existence Prenatal and postmortal.

The soul being the invariable concomitance of the forces inherent in matter and ever correlated with it, is death to be regarded as the end of human existence? Or does man survive bodily death to suffer or enjoy, in a life after death, the results of his actions in this world? In order to come to a solution on this point, it is first of all necessary to examine the widely divergent doctrines now extant regarding the after-life of man. The Christian doctrine teaches us that after death the soul remain at rest in a place called the purgatory, till on the Final Day of Judgment, when God awards to each, punishment in shape of eternal perdition (Hell) or reward (Heaven) according to the deserts of their actions during the earth-life.

The Hindus hold that after death the soul suffers in hell or enjoys in heaven, the results of his deeds bad or good, and is then reborn on earth with parentage, environments or outer circumstances and tendencies or capacities in accordance with his actions, feelings and thoughts during the past life. The differences observable among animals and men are due thus to the good or evil *karma* or actions, in their previous lives. They further maintain that if the *Dharma* or the specific duties

attached to the specific states are faithfully followed, man can attain to *mukti* and his soul finds its rest in and is indrawn into God and is not reborn. They further hold that under special circumstances and due to sin and specific acts of transgression of the Divine laws of *Dharma*, the soul may be born into a *Preta* (Ghost). The Christians too believe in ghosts or spirits. The Bhrahmos are not quite clear as to the afterlife but they too maintain that the soul is (नित्य) eternal and that there are sufferings or enjoyments in the afterlife according to the nature and character of actions performed in this world.

Let us now see if these theories are probable and tenable. The Christian doctrine if believed would lead us to infer that either God is creating millions and millions of new souls every day according to variety of forms evolved or that innumerable number of souls exist inactive for eternities in the void of an infinite space except for short period of the earth-life. This is the only possible inference because they do not hold the theory of rebirth, though admitting the continued existence of individual souls after bodily death.

The unreasonableness of this view is obvious on the very face of it. If the soul existed without a body how was it acting and in what condition did it exist? What shall be its condition and how shall it act when it shuffles off its mortal coil? Whatever be the state and the function of the soul in the post-mortem stage, it must be admitted that it was in the form of a *Jiva*, of specialised life, else you cannot avoid the conclusion.

that before birth and after death the soul remains in a static state of inactivity worse than even that of lifeless matter.

Activity and initiation being the distinguishing features of the soul, does it not seem extremely unreasonable to credit the soul with a state of eternal inaction? The Brahmo doctrine almost approaches the Christian and need not be separately dwelt upon.

The Hindu doctrine in this respect is the most natural and in accordance with reason. By the intervention of the series of past and future lives, it has avoided the difficulties regarding the continuous creation of new souls on the one hand and the eternal inactivity of souls on the other. A question might arise that if the same soul continues from life to life, how has the human population on the face of the earth multiplied hundredfold during the last thousand years? This objection is met by positing that the souls of the lower animals are evolving into the human stage and thus increasing their number.

It may be further objected that since the lower animals are also increasing in number, where do the souls of these lower animals come from? This objection stands answered when we admit that all things have souls as attempted to be shewn in the last chapter. The Hindu Scriptures have recognised the existence of the units of life in all things divergent though they be in manifestation of their powers. According to them man can be born into the lower vegetables and animal organisms and even into the minerals and other states of

matter as the result of evil actions in the previous lives. Even the lopping off of the branch of a tree is regarded as cruelty and sin involving moral issues. The Hindu theory seems to us to be based on truth. It has been proved that although the soul is conscious, it is correlated with matter and that although nothing is created afresh or destroyed absolutely, everything is liable to a change of state and condition.

- If the soul is regarded as becoming unrelated to the material bodies at the time of death or change of state, what brings about the subsequent changes in matter thus bereft of life? Matter as ordinarily held has no life, no energy of its own. If by analogy, the conversion of water into vapour be regarded as the death and the vapour state is seen as being devoid of life, how then does the same vapor rebecome water? Where does the energy in lifeless and unconscious vapour come from? Hence nothing can be said to have an origin or end. Similarly the 'I' in us has neither a beginning nor an end. The I existed in the past, it exists now and shall exist in the future. These are changes of states merely and do not affect the I. At death my body will be resolved into the constituents of the earth, water, air &c.; but in the self same way as water re-manifests from the vapour state these materials will again combine and mingle and thus give rise to other bodies in the future. This is my after-life, just as the form from which the present body has come is my past life. From the present body of mine, vegetables may evolve or even it may produce the

lower animal organisms as the worms and insects, it may reappear as birds or animals. Again perchance a man may grow out of the materials of my present body.

If I become a man again, it is certainly my former self which is at work—it is the same I, although I may not be in a position to know precisely what I had been before. If I do anything for the good and wellbeing of the future humanity and if the individual born out of the purified materials of my present body in their future combinations derives any benefit therefrom, then surely it is I who shall be enjoying the fruits of my present *karma*. Since the present 'I' and the future I are both born out of the same materials or constituents and when both the 'I's feel equally happy, when placed in things desirable and enjoyable, there can be really no difference between the two 'I's. The one is certainly the (परकाश) after-life of the other. Even if I get a body other than the human in any after-life, the self—same I-ness is still there and as such it is nothing but my after-life.

There is absolutely no knowing what time will elapse ere I regain the human stage in the future and what intermediate states I may have to pass through before rebecoming a man. The probabilities are however in favour of man to rebecome a man in the next life, just as there is a greater probability of water-vapour to rebecome water than anything else. But one thing is apparent that if God's laws are followed the soul is bound to evolve: That is why as time rolls on the human souls are increasing, for the souls of the minerals are evolving into vege-

vegetables into worms and insects, worms and insects into birds and animals, and these latter into men. We cannot otherwise account for the increase in the number of human souls. That is why the Hindu Scriptures speak of the human stage having been attained to with great difficulty after passing through 8,400,000 lives in the lower kingdoms. The *Shastras* further say that this rule is liable to vary according to the quality of actions and circumstances, *i. e.*, souls may retrograde on account of evil actions and that a man may be reborn into a bird, a beast or a worm, or even in lower forms of life.

It may be contended that admitting that nothing is destroyed and that other things may evolve out of the matter which constitutes my present body, what proof is there that the constituents which now form my body shall not be distributed into a number of bodies instead of going to form a single body? In that case how am I reborn? Let us ask what do you mean by the "I"? Does the "I" mean the whole body, the combination of all the different members or parts thereof? Does not the "I" remain the same even if the body is bereft of the hands or the feet? If the I-notion is impossible unless the whole body is perfect in all its parts and has all the individual organs and functions, then I cannot be the same I when I am fat, that I was when I was lean, nor the same I when I am of age that I was when I was young. The I manifesting through an emaciated body, has evidently lost much of what there was in the body when it was robust and fat, and the young I retains nothing of the child I. There is a continual

change in the materials and also in the constituents of the body at the different stages. If the totality of these constituents in the body is the principal element—the *sine qua non* of continued existence and the identity of the I notion—then this ‘I’ cannot exist and remain the same for a moment. Therefore the term ‘I’ is not applicable to the mere addition or combination of all the materials of this body ; and the combination of all the constituents of the present body is not absolutely necessary to the manifestation and continuous existence of the I in a future state or an after-life. The I is atomic as well as molecular ; it is a thing of larger dimensions than the cells. It is even minuter than the thousandth part of the tiny speck of matter constituting the foetus in the womb where the I first manifested, for the rudiments of all the organs necessary for the expression of energies and faculties in the adult life were then unmanifest in that undifferentiated form. The soul which is the ‘I’ is thus subtle and intangible, and can function in an atomic form as well as in the molecular. It can very easily manifest itself in and through any vehicle, and cannot be subdivided when the present form is dissolved or distributed back into its constituents. It is impartible even when the body is transformed into its minute particles.

Next comes the question whether man suffers or enjoys according to the actions of his previous life. We think he does : for if the progress made in the previous life does not persist in and follow the soul into its subsequent life, how can the soul in the vegetables gradually



evolve into the human soul ? Nothing is lost in Nature, and the Law of Conservation of Energy applies equally to man. The persistence of the previous acquired powers of combination and growth is the necessary prerequisite of evolution, for the permanence and continuity of progress. The transmission of acquired characteristics and tendencies from father to son also goes to prove the persistence, in every stage of the human soul, of the elements of progress or retrogression in the former stages or lives.

Sometimes we find that assiduity and intelligence do not succeed in securing the desired results of actions, and that man having necessary faculties, and notwithstanding repeated efforts fail in producing proper effects, while others not much endowed with intelligence, and without or with very little endeavour succeed to a considerable extent. Carnegie rose to the foremost rank in wealth from the humble position of a page. Are not other pages like him ? Why then did he succeed where others fail to attain to even a thousandth part of his success although they tried a thousandth time ? Instances may be multiplied to show that many men had earned a world-wide reputation with the help of trivial and trifling incidents in their lives, while many a good and great man have lost their all through no fault of their own. Lord Clive with a handful of soldiers defeated the vast army of Sirajuddowla, while the bravest of the brave, Rana Pratap Singh of Chitore could do nothing against the incursions of the Mogul Emperor notwithstanding his heroic and almost super-human endeavours. Mulhar Rao lost a throne and his independence almost

for nothing, while Allauddin reigned with the same unabated glory in spite of his innumerable atrocities. What is the reason of all these ? It goes to prove that faculties and aptitudes evolved by steady application in a previous life are interwoven into the nature of the soul in the next (परकाल), and it is only when these faculties are so operative that they help in dictating a man the course he should take in similar situations producing the greatest result with the least possible expenditure of energy, even though the circumstances in which he is now placed may have changed. These innate tendencies, aptitudes and faculties come we know not whence ; but they unmistakably help in regulating the life and conduct in a subsequent birth. Thus the Indian sages call the *unseen* (अदृष्ट) the mysterious effects of previous actions. We notice also another mode of manifestation of the same law of *karma*—the inscrutability of the *unseen* (अदृष्ट). It lies in opportunities which go under the name of a good time, luck or chance. This is what Shakespeare refers to as the change of tides in the affairs of men. It is often seen that at times, the scales of fate turn mysteriously leading to success while at other times events only lead to failure ; so that the man in first instance has merely to go on with the current, attaining uniform success, while in the latter case there is no getting out of troubles and difficulties however much he may fight with the same. But the cause of this yet remains to be discovered. An illustration of such good or bad time is seen at cards, where the gambler meets with times of uniform success or uniform failure of varying durations.

This tide in the events of life cannot be altered by the most strenuous endeavours on the part of man. This is अदृष्ट, the unseen effects of previous actions as they affect our environments. This is what the astrologers speak of as being the effects of the influence of good or evil stars, and they are not wholly in error. Where the cause of an effect is not apparent or cannot be known it is called the अदृष्ट (unseen). Where no cause can be assigned to an effect, man is content to put it down to fate (अदृष्ट). But though the connection between the previous actions and the present run of luck is not quite apparent, yet there must be some connection between the two. Hence the *shastras* speak of these as effects of our actions in previous lives, which affect for good or evil the human and other units around us, producing वर्ण (race, caste or status), आयु (length and contents of life) and भोग (quantity and nature of enjoyment derivable from the outer world of environments). There are other effects such as enjoyment in a Heaven-world or in Hell, which are beyond our ordinary ken. These will be dealt with in the chapter on God and Wisdom.

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## CHAPTER V.

### God.

What is God? What is the Nature or Essence of God and what are his functions? Is He knowable and have we powers to know Him? Have men who talk glibly of God found out his essential nature? We ought to see what they mean by saying so. The first difficulty that meets us in our search after Him, is that being Infinite in His Essence He is beyond the reach of human knowledge, which is necessarily finite. It is claimed by the various systems of religion that He has revealed Himself in their respective scriptures and laid down the duties of man, that man should follow these scriptures, that violation or transgression of the injunctions thus laid down therein brings on in its train God's displeasure and hence eternal sufferings in hell or perdition. But unfortunately many and diverse are the books which are claimed to have been so revealed by God. Each and every system claims its particular scripture to be the one so revealed and denounces and discards the scriptures of other faiths either as atheistic or as full of errors and as fictitious. How are we then to decide as to which one of them is really the book of God?

It would have been possible for us to find out the true path were there even an uniformity or harmony in the views set forth in these books. But far from being

uniform or harmonious, they are so much mutually conflicting, so much antagonistic to each other that to accept any one of them in its entirety as true would inevitably mean the discarding of the others as false. Followers of different faiths try to define God in diverse ways. Thus some describe Him as Formless, the others as having form. some as *Purusha*, others as *Prakriti*, some as having two arms, others as having four, some as black, others as white, others again depict Him as the Lover of the devotees, as the Helper of the poor, as the Saviour of men and by various other names and attributes. Some say that the highest duty of man consists in not injuring any form of life, while others maintain that the sacrifice of animal life is agreeable to the Deity. Some hold that rice, plantain and flowers are best sacrifices unto Him, while others take their stand on silent meditation as the only means to His Grace. Some hold it is a great sin to take food touched by a man of a lower caste, while others maintain that the distinction of castes could never have been the intention of God. The Christians regard men of other religions as heathens devoid of Grace, to save whom they have organised missions all over the world. The Muhammedans again regard all others as infidels and so long as these do not accept their faith they are not entitled to wealth and reputation, life and possessions, and hence the destruction of the lives and possessions of the infidels—nay of mighty historical monuments is held to be a religious duty bounden on every true Muhammedan. The Hindus are most tolerant in this respect and they hold that salvation is

open to every one if he follows the *Swadharma* or the religion laid down in the faith in which he is born. They even regard as sin and as swerving from the path of rectitude, the renouncement of his own faith by a man. In this way different religions seek to define God and the main duties of man in diverse and often conflicting ways. There is no uniformity in these presentments and the followers of almost every faith piously believe that those who follow a different faith from their own are doomed to perdition and endless suffering in hell.

Now which of these authoritative books are we going to accept as revealed? Which view is true? What line should we follow in order to be sure that we are proceeding along the right track? Who is the Real God? Is He Christ or Mahomet, Vishnu or Durga? Which faith is truly sanctioned by God? Which path would save us from Hell? It is necessary to be enlightened on these points, because although we may forego the prospect of the pleasures and enjoyments of Heaven, we cannot be indifferent to the prospects of sufferings in Hell which the following of a false line would entail. How can we do without a knowledge of Him and His laws, when His displeasure is so fruitful of momentous issues to us, when it is His mercy or grace which places us in the enjoyments or pleasures of life, and His displeasure brings on in its train the sufferings in Hell? It is thus our first and foremost duty to know Him, to be able to adore and worship Him. For this reason the discussions relating to the nature and functions of God and the different

tems of philosophies have originated. But the propounders of these different systems have all failed to define God and His works or functions, notwithstanding the various and manifold devices adopted therein. That is why the *Charbak* and other materialistic thinkers have denied the existence of God altogether. Others have tried to establish the existence of God by means of various metaphysical subtleties, but these efforts at definition or formulation of God's essence have virtually ended in nescience and atheism. According to the foremost thinkers, God is Formless, Changeless, Devoid of all attributes, Absolute and Unrelated. All these attributes are negatives in their trend; they describe what He is not. Thus God exists yet He has no form, no attributes and no functions; there is thus nothing to indicate His existence, nothing by which the human mind can reach Him. So that it is virtually conceded that there is no God, as He is beyond the highest conception of man and absolutely without any relation to him or to any other finite being or thing.

In this way the philosophers have instead of establishing the existence of God, done quite the reverse of it. Hence very often the study of philosophies have only made people sceptics or atheists, and they have further lost their simple and unreasoned faith in and reverence for the scriptures. Some of these learned people, more daring than the rest, have framed scriptures of their own containing a curious medley of the rational or critical spirit underlying philosophy and the spirit of belief or unreasoned faith belonging properly to the domains of

the scriptures. These products lack in the cool logical spirit of enquiry of the philosophic systems as well as in the spirit of breathless aspiration and ardent hope with which Religion endows its followers and they have thus in short failed in their essential purpose. Neo-Brahmoism is an illustration to the point. On the one hand it has endorsed and accepted the philosophical postulates of God as Formless, Absolute and Unrelated, while in the same breath promulgated worship and faith appertaining to Religion. Thus while treating God as an absolute principle beyond form and manifestation, Brahmoism maintains the theory of an extra-cosmic deity doling out punishment or reward according as his injunctions are violated or otherwise. It believes that man is punished by God in the after-life if he does not secure His grace by worship and by works enjoined by God. The followers of this system, thus seek by faith to know and define the existence and the nature of God and yet resort to reason and argument in order to determine the duties pleasurable to God, and the transgressions of which go against the manifestations of His Grace. They are averse to arguments and reasonings so far as to affect God's existence and even regard such arguments to be atheistic. Like the believers in scriptural and revealed religions, Brahmoism holds that its novel and new-fangled views, arrived at through reasoning, to be the direct commands of God and as such the only means of salvation. While at the same time it is not averse through philosophical arguments and reasonings to convert others into the own faith.



Thus the philosophers and originators of new religious systems, such as Brahmoism, in their attempt to unify the religions, have only helped to preach and disseminate atheism of a kind. This simply proves that like the systems of philosophies, the scriptures also are the products of the human mind. It is apparent with the help of reason that man cannot imagine anything which is beyond human conception. That is why in attempting to depict Heaven and its objects, they have used imageries, such as golden palaces, diamond pillars, rivers of nectar, eternal spring, and life without suffering and pain. All these are but the projecting of all that is best and finest within the knowledge of man. In one word, the joys of Heaven are the joys of the earth sublimated, and projected into a finer back-ground.

It is just the same with the delineation of God. He is credited with such attributes from man—the highest of created things—which man has found in man. The difference lies in the fact that in the case of God some of these attributes have either been intensified and others have been totally denied.

Those who hold that God has form (साकारवादी), have depicted God as having wife and children, enjoyment and powers, prosperity and adversity, friends and foes, and even as having political and social principles of his own such as man have on earth. The believers in the Formless, regard and hate them as idolators, but they do not see that they in their turn are no better. True, they have not clothed God with the properties or attributes of the human physical

body, but they have adopted those of the mind, such as Will, likes and dislikes, a strong liking for the gratitude of his believers, a love of adulation, the desire to reward and punish, knowledge &c. They reck not whether it is possible for God to possess these attributes which the slightest rational consideration will show to be inapplicable to and inconsistent with God. We now proceed to deal with them in detail.

The prior state or condition precedent to action is Will, that is why there is always an action as soon as there is a determination of the Will. There can be no determination of the Will without a motive in view. Man desires happiness and the establishment of the self, yet he is not endowed with infinite powers.\* Hence he has always at his heart the attainment of perfection, thinks of the satisfaction of his desires and so he wills therefor. But what motive can God possibly have to move Him to act. All things admittedly belong to Him and are His. He is perfect and has no imperfections or want to fulfil, and as such He can possibly have no desire, and consequently no determination of the Will. Unless you say that God also craves after perfection and happiness, and that such happiness is beyond His present powers to fulfill, you cannot say that He wills one way or other. But if you say so, He can no longer be God. What is He in want of and what does He hanker after? What is it that stands in the way of the immediate satisfaction of that want? Especially Will &c are meaningless except in connection with finite and conditioned, and therefore imperfect beings, and if He is credited with this

imperfection, then He must necessarily be regarded as being conditioned and limited by bodies or vehicles.

Man likes that which is conducive to the establishment and perfection of the self and dislikes that which is antagonistic thereto. When God has no self to evolve and establish, what do you mean by His likes and dislikes? If He had any, He would have created such objects only as He likes and not those that He dislikes, and thereby could not have helped the evil in us to be led and nourished with the objectionable things. And even if He created them, He would have taken care to let us know the ones He likes and the ones He dislikes. When He expects and wants us to do our duty by doing what He likes, it is only right and proper that He should do so. If He had clearly formulated His will, probably we would not have differed so much in our estimate of things harmonious or otherwise to His will. Some say that in so far as He has created all things, it is not His will, that one should kill another. Others say certainly it is His will or He would not have created ferocious animals which live by killing others. In this way we find that thousands of contradictory views are extant with regard to God's likes and dislikes. Further if evil is disharmonious to Him, why does God patiently bear with it all this time? Those who injure themselves or retard the evolution of man are called "bad," those that help in this evolution and benefit humanity are called "good". Bad people are inimical to the interests of the whole and that is why we punish them, while good people are rewarded and encouraged in acts which would

benefit us. But why does God punish evil-doers and reward the good ? We, puny mortals, can neither help nor retard His will and His work. It is impossible also that God does this with the good of the world in view, for the good and the bad are equally His creations. Had it not been His intention then these could not have come into existence, and He can have no justification to punish evil-doing which He has Himself brought into existence.

Some say that God never created evil, but man has brought evil into existence by infringing the laws of God. But this view cannot hold good because it presumes that man is and has the power to be regarded as the antagonist and enemy to God. But how can this view of man going against God be reconciled with the Omnipotence of God. If man can thus frustrate the will of God, it detracts from His Almighty nature, and He has to admit defeat at the hands of men. It is of course within His power to punish man after death, but it almost appears that with living men, He is powerless to enforce compliance with His laws. The question next will arise : Wherefrom does man get the powers of defeating this will of God ? Man is created by God, has he not then received his powers also from God ? Has man anything all his own ? Are the powers of the mind and the desires, such as intelligence, conscience, lust, anger, greed, egotism, malice &c his own self-evolved possessions ? If he has derived them all from God why should he be punished for acts done through the help of powers with which he has been endowed, and held responsible

for deeds done under the influence of evil propensities which have come from God ?

Some say God has never endowed man with the propensities for evil-doing. He has merely given man freedom of the Will, and man is responsible for any mis-use of that privilege, he would have done good deeds if he had wished so. But what do you mean by the independent Will, God has given to man ? Do you take this independence to mean the choice to do just as one would like ? Has God given us absolute freedom and choice in the matter of our actions good or bad ? If so, why should there be punishment for evil deeds and reward for the good ones ? Such rewards and punishments are certainly inconsistent with the absolute liberty of choice. It comes to something like this ; as if God has said that "I don't care if you follow my behests or not, I give you absolute choice in the matter, but if you follow me I will reward, and if not, will punish you." Is this the independence that you speak of ? If so, it is clear that He has arranged for the punishment of evil deeds without providing for right choice on the part of men. If punishment is meted out in a case like this, it looks as if God is simply intent on inflicting punishment. Further in the case of Divine Justice the proper purpose of reward and punishment is not served. All punishments being meant for correction and the rewards for encouragement, they must be borne home to their recipients, it must be proved to man how one course of conduct leads to the one and the opposite course to the other. When a man is punished he knows that

the punishment comes as the result of a certain misdeed and he learns the lesson and avoids a repetition of the same in future. Similarly the reward for good actions serves as an incentive to further goodness. Moreover these rewards and punishments serve as examples to others stimulating or deterring them as the case may be. But the reward or punishment awarded by God cannot be directly and clearly traced to the acts which bring them on. It is true that the different scriptures contain enumerations of good and evil actions with their appropriate rewards and punishments, but the accounts are by no means unanimous. An act, which is according to one religion is good and pious, is just the reverse according to another, and there is no means of knowing which one of these presentments is true. We can never perceive the direct consequences of misdeeds. In the case of hunger, it instinctively leads us to food so essential to life, but there is no such faculty in us which unerringly propels us to good acts and protects us from evil-doing which directly proves the casual connection of actions with rewards &c. How are we then to distinguish between good and evil actions and the results produced from them?

Some admit the existence of such a faculty in our conscience. Conscience is described as the inner sense for discriminating between good and evil by the feeling of joy and repentance when doing good or evil deeds. But the mental outcome of joy or otherwise is purely the result of education and habit. Because

a religious man would repent of killing a flea, while the soldier, or even the murderer, would not feel the slightest tinge of pain while taking thousands of human lives. The Hindus feel pain or compunction in taking wine even for medical purposes, while the Europeans derive pleasure from the habitual and constant use of it. In this way the feeling of repentance or self-gratification, of exaltation or depression depends really on education and habit, the dictates of conscience varying as they do in the case of different individuals, cannot be regarded to be the result of an innate faculty. The matter is considered more fully in Chapter VIII.

Some maintain that the results of our actions can be directly realised. Thus bad food produces disease, industry begets wealth, fame results from charity and so forth. Of course to a certain extent the result of certain acts may be directly seen, but man in the savage state is perfectly in the dark with regard to those even. The phenomenon is only limited to the civilised man, and is due to the culture of the wits and the mind. Moreover such knowledge is very limited even among the civilised men, and its value is almost nullified by the numerous exceptions to these rules which we find at almost every step.

It is often seen that in many the taking of bad food does not affect longevity, while in the case of others good food and regular habits cannot save them from premature death or continuous ill-health. Some turn out enormously rich with scarcely any endeavour worth the name, while the best efforts of many are not enough to eke out even

a hand-to-mouth therefrom. A careful examination will show that in fact no definite and uniform connection between actions and their consequences can be established. Witness the every day phenomena of men suffering the loss of their dearest objects, and of epidemics and famines devastating whole countries without any apparent misdeeds on the part of the sufferers to which these can be traced. This makes it clear that we are not in possession of any powers or faculties to distinguish between evil and good actions, or to trace particular rewards or punishments to any particular actions, individual or communal. The purpose therefore of rewards and punishments in indicating the principles of universal application fails, and there can be no use in God punishing or rewarding us. Having dealt with these general considerations, let us take up and consider the Divine attributes one by one. First let us consider whether God is always partial to worship. If He is pleased with those who praise Him and His Divine virtues, and is displeased with those who do not. The gradation amongst men, man's vanity and ambition, his longing for self-improvement, can explain why man is partial to one who praises and flatters him. Yet man is never angry with one who does not praise him, but with him only who abuses him. But God is said to be angry unless He is praised. How far are we to believe that God exceeds man in the desire for adulation and worship? He has none who is not absolutely dependent on Him, none who is even His equal. Why then should He be credited with



such weakness for praise? Even amongst men, one who is vain-glorious and fond of flattery is rightly regarded as narrow-minded. Is God then worse than these? Has He brought us forth in this world to hear His own flattery, the peans of His own glory? Why did He not fill the universe with man alone who can voice His praise? Why has He created worms, insects, birds, animals &c who cannot thus chant His glory and then worship Him? He should then have created only men, •men like the angels of the Bible, free from other duties and cares of life, and devoted to the worship and chanting of His glory.

The next point claimed is that man must be grateful to God, that is to say that He will be wrathful unless gratitude is felt and expressed by man, because He in His infinite mercy has created men, has been giving them their daily bread and supplying various other things conducive to their happiness. We can understand this of man: Man has to be grateful to another who has in any way benefitted him, because man's nature is essentially selfish, his own happiness is his principal end, and it is purely a matter of favor on his part to look to the happiness of another, and hence nobody can take him to task if he does not do so. The man who benefits another at his own cost does the other man a favour for which that other should naturally be grateful to him. But what is the necessity of being grateful to God,? Does he suffer any loss or forego anything to do good unto us? Besides as everything belongs to Him, and is, in fact, a part and

parcel of His life, by benefitting or doing good to us. He is really benefitting Himself. And after all what good has He done unto us? Has He done us any good by creating us? We owe our existence as man to Him and as all existence presupposes consciousness, we should not have felt pleasure and pain if He had not created us. Pleasure and pain are the results of His creation and our existence is a doubtful blessing. Maintenance of our existence, placing us in happiness are no grounds for our being grateful to Him, because we are His creation and belong to Him, and the law, that from want of food death results, is also His. If He gives us food, we, who all belong to Him, live otherwise die. What does it matter one way or the other? If it concerns anybody, it is Him that it does concern. If we were not created by Him, if we came into existence through some other agency or force, all by ourselves, and He had preserved us by giving food and made us happy, then there would have been some justification for the demand and the claim on our gratitude. With a view perhaps to put this matter on a rational basis that the Aryan philosophers have set up the Trinity (त्रिमूर्ति), Brahma creates, Vishnu preserves and Siva destroys. According to this, we ought to be grateful to Vishnu, because unless He placed us in food, we who are created by Brahma, can not live. After all where is this will-o'-wisp, the happiness for which men should be grateful to God? Nobody is found to be happy in this world. Some are suffering from want of food, others from disease, one is mourning over the loss of a beautiful

wife, another over an affectionate son, one is being trodden under by his enemy, another is homeless—in fact there is misery all around. Those who are reckoned as the most fortunate are not free from diseases and sorrow, pain and suffering. There is no man living who has not experienced sorrow and pain. Would you ask a coolie to be grateful for the pittance itself inadequate he earns by his daily hard labour under the tropical sun, when that even is not often available? Shall the peasant be grateful for the loss of his crops through flood, the crops he had reared by hard labour in season and out of season under the fierce sun and the damp cold of the rains? Shall the sweeper be grateful for the dirty work he has got to do for his bare subsistence? Shall the famine-stricken people be grateful for the sufferings and the imminent death staring them on the face? Should those who have lost their hearth and home by the ravages of a storm or flood be grateful to God for His wise providence? Shall those who suffer from epidemics be thankful for the havoc done? Shall the Napolitans be grateful for the devastations due to the volcano? Shall the blind be grateful for the loss of his sight, the deaf for the loss of his powers of hearing, and the lame for want of legs? Are we to be grateful to God for the unnecessary troubles which are the concomitants of our finite existence in the world? How can it be said that He gives us food when we have got to work for it? How has He arranged for our happiness when the whole of our time is engrossed or taken up by the efforts to avoid the thousand and one sufferings

that flesh is heir to, and when not one is free to seek for the joys of life ?

Then it is said that God is All-wise. What is wisdom ? The wisdom that we know of in man is gained by, and is the result of ever-growing knowledge of the universe by means of observation and experience. The child who is lacking in experience is also wanting in wisdom. But man's life is only three score and ten, and even shorter, and the powers of and the opportunities for direct knowledge are very much limited. So the records of the accumulated experiences of humanity are the principal sources of knowledge to man. Knowledge and wisdom consist in learning what others have realised, experienced and observed. But God has created all things and He must be presumed to be conversant with their properties and actions. There is nothing that remains for Him to know. There is clearly no necessity for attributing wisdom to Him. He has nothing to know, and hence has no wisdom. Next we have it that God is Good. But do we not find evil ( अलङ्कार ) present everywhere in the universe ? In nature we constantly find animals preying upon one another. Man is the highest of the animals, but we find that impelled by desires he kills, robs, and oppresses others in manifold ways. Puffed up with vanity for their strength, nations try to conquer and subjugate others, they kill and rob just as an individual man and even find pleasure in demolishing the ancient monuments of the other nations. History proves it beyond all doubt and personal experience verifies it. Is this the work of God supposed to be All-Good ?

Then comes the teleological argument, the arguments of design, in which much is made of the skill, intelligence and purpose of God in creation. But what is skill? Perfect skill consists in the power of so arranging events, in laying out a plan by adopting which good results all around, and the quantum of evil is reduced. But do we find any trace of such skill in the world-design or of perfection in any law? Is there any evidence of perfection in these? In any one of these, evil is the preponderating element instead of perfection. The very plan or device which has been adopted for keeping us alive—the law of hunger which impels us to take food—is the cause of disease and death. The pleasure of eating is far outweighed by the pain of hunger. Then again bad articles of food, or even food in excess, bring about disease and illness. Affection and love which attract as to the world outside, under certain circumstances, are the causes of our disaffection or dislike towards the things of this world. The pleasure of the lover's meeting is more than compensated by the pain and anguish of separation. The birth of a son does not make one so happy as his death makes him sorrowful. Water, air and heat without which we cannot live are also our chief enemies. In this way it is seen that every design of God is faulty, none is free from evil. How can it then be said that the designs of God are free from evil and imperfection?

What appears strange is that there is so much conflict and contradiction in the attributes ascribed to God. He is called both Merciful and Almighty. How

can He be called Merciful when there is so much suffering in the universe. If He is Almighty and can do anything He likes, then certainly He could have prevented all these useless sufferings. But since He has not done so, He must be taken to be either merciless, or conditioned and limited in His powers. In no way can He be credited with both these opposite attributes at the same time.

Further, it is said that God's knowledge transcends the limitations of time and space, and that He is the Dispenser of the fruits of actions. Since God knows the future, there is an absolute predestination governing all finite acts of all beings, for no knowledge is possible without an element of certainty, of regularity and changelessness. If it is not certain whether John is going to kill Harry to-morrow, God cannot have a definite knowledge of it. Hence Omniscience is dependent on predestination. If He has from the beginning of the universe a knowledge of the whole future in every minutest detail, it must be said there is a certainty either as to the fact that John will kill Harry to-morrow or that he will not. If events are thus predestined, human effort and responsibility become meaningless terms. What is destined to happen must happen, and any attempt to alter the course of events is utterly futile and hopeless. Man therefore ceases to be responsible for his own actions, as all events must happen in their appointed time and sequence irrespective of any attempts or otherwise on the part of man. So that if God is Omniscient, He cannot truly be the Dispenser of the fruits of our actions.

If on the other hand He is so, and it is conceded that man has freedom of actions and liberty of choice without which there can be no responsibility, God can not be omniscient, because what is going to happen in the future is within the province of man's independent will only, and there can be no certainty as to the particular course of action a man will adopt.

God is said to be impartial, and is at the same time called the Lover of His devotees. If He loves His devotees, He certainly does not love those who are not so devoted. How then He is impartial? Impartiality means that to Him all things are equal, and that He views them all in the same light. Why then is there so much of difference in the universe? Why is one being a worm and another a man? Why is one a king, another a subject? One rich, another poor? One strong, another weak? One intelligent, another a simpleton? One handsome, another ugly? If you impute this difference to individual efforts (Karma), you say that man has free-will and God can not be omniscient. If it is contended that He in His impartiality has bestowed strength, intelligence, and free-will in equal portion on all, how would you account for the difference of conditions in created things? If, however, He had not endowed them equally, He can not justly be called impartial. So also, God is said to be Formless, Changeless, without definition and action. It is impossible that such a thing can exist, and even if it can exist, it can be of no use to any one. If God is such, He cannot be the Creator, Preservor and Destroyer of the universe. He cannot be the kind

Dispenser of Justice which orthodox philosophy claims Him to be. If on the other hand, He has the attributes above-mentioned, He is not without definition and action.

A consideration of these points clearly shows that God with the attributes ordinarily ascribed to Him, is the outcome of the human mind and imagination. Otherwise we would have found at least one attribute in God which is seen not in man. In fact judging from the analogy of things, man argues that as everything in the universe has its cause, the universe as a whole must also have its cause, and that cause has been named God. As God could not be reached by knowledge, He has been placed beyond it. Does it not clearly show that the attributes of God are all the products of human imagination? Because how could man come to know the attributes of one who is beyond all knowledge? When His attributes are known, how do you say that He is beyond knowledge? If the knowledge of attributes is not the knowledge of a thing, then we have to admit that we know nothing, and even matter is unknowable to us, because nothing but the properties of matter can be known by us.

The Atheists deny the existence of God altogether on the strength of arguments cited above. But is this conclusion also satisfactory? Is it reasonable that an infinite number of objects and things none of which can have the powers of self-production at will should come to exist without the direct power of a Being regulating the course of their evolution and mutual interaction? Do all these come and go of themselves? Have we been



born of our own will, and do we die at will? It cannot be so. Who has then brought us to being, and who shall take us away? If you hold that matter alone is at the root of it all, it would be equally a mistake, for matter can have no self initiating energy of its own. It may however be said that if the existence of God is necessary to satisfy our search after a cause of the universe, how would you explain the existence of that cause again? If God has been called Beginningless and Endless merely to avoid the fallacy of Infinite Regression, then it will be equally vaild to say that the universe itself is endless and without origin. What is the necessity of taking the aid of imagination for proving a Being as the source? It has been proved that the universe is beginningless and endless, and as such it is uncreate.

But as a matter of fact most of the objections dealt with above are based upon a partial view of things. Material science also is gradually tending towards the recognition of a unitary force guiding the course of the universe. Modern science which studies phenomena and forms has found out that atoms themselves are complex, and that they undergo spontaneous disintegration. Researches have shown that material substance when placed under extraordinary conditions of cold suffer destruction of their apparently permanent properties. Experiments have proved that heat, light, electricity, magnetism are but modifications of one and the same energy. This is but the testimony to the One that

underlies all manifestations. The practical difference therefore between the scientific atheist who calls the fundamental energy which is at the root of the universe. Nature, and the theist who regards God as the source and substratum of the universe, lies in this—that the one regards the primordial force as unconscious, and the other regards God as a conscious and rational being. The opening verses of St. John express this nicely. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things are made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of man." This Word is but the manifestation of God—the Absolute reflecting through the universe what we call Nature.

The atheists say that God is not a rational Being. If He is so, why does He not end all the evil and cruelty in this world? This assertion itself sounds very ridiculous, that though we vaunt so much of our intelligence, we do not consider our source to be intelligent. The chief argument against the rationality of the Creator of this universe is the presence of evil and pain in creation. But this argument is based upon a narrow view of things, and on a morbid sensibility which unduly magnifies the pain and misery incident upon our finite existence.

God is slowly and gradually educating the world, step by step, making it work out its own lessons as the best teachers do with their pupils. Evil has its own way of drawing out the good. Creation would be meaningless without variety. Differentiation is creation. Our

world is the result of contradictory forces acting from opposite directions. For the purposes of evolution the balancing of forces is necessary and without this there cannot be complete evolution.

We cannot realise happiness if we have not suffered misery. But really there is nothing so very terrible in misery. For without it we cannot have any proper idea of its opposite — happiness. There could not have been any taste for food, if there was not the pain of hunger. The cool shade would not have been so delicious, if there were no pains from the scorching rays of the sun. The rich could not have reaped the pleasures of wealth if there were no sorrows of poverty. We could not have understood the peace of a moral and religious life, if we have not seen the sufferings of sin. After every happiness comes misery. They are inextricably connected. Plato has well said : “ How singular in the thing called pleasure and how curiously related to pain which might be thought to be its opposite, for they never come to a man together, and yet he who pursues either of them is generally compelled to take the other. They are two and yet they grow together out of one head or stem, and I cannot help thinking that if Æsop have noticed them, he would have made a fable about God trying to reconcile their strife, and when He could not, He fastened their heads together, and this is the reason why when one comes the other follows.” There is no possibility of our ever having pleasure without pain, good without evil.

But after all good and evil, pleasure and pain

are in our own minds. That which once gave us pain, will give us pleasure at another time. The water which is really painful to touch in the cold weather is very cooling and delicious in the hot days. We cry for rain in the hot days of summer, while we are right glad to part with it in the rainy season. If we consider carefully, it will be clear that evil is conducive to good and we derive most happiness from fighting out a sorrow, and the pleasure which comes after pain is lasting and sweet.

“Rich the treasure  
Sweet the pleasure  
Sweet is pleasure after pain.”

But, in sooth, the pleasures derived from the enjoyment of earthly things is not the real pleasure and there is nothing terrible in suffering earthly sorrows. Even Death which is looked upon with so much dread, loses half of its terror to the calm and unimpassioned mind. When nobody has felt any pleasure when he is first born in this world, why should he feel any pain when dying? Life and death are only the different names of the same eternal fact. There would have been no life if there were no death, and without life there would have been no evolution. Lord Sri Krishna has said :—

देहिनीऽस्मिन् यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा

तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मूच्छति ।

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय

नवानि षृङ्गाति नरोऽपराणि ।

तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा-

न्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ।

"As the Dweller in the body passeth in the body through childhood, youth and old age, so he passeth on to the another body, the well-balanced grieveth not thereat."

"As a man casting off worn out garments taketh new ones, so the Dweller in the body casting off worn out bodies entereth into others that are new."

When we feel pain if we remain in one state for a day or two, when we find that even pleasure tires us if continued for a long time, it may well be imagined how much tiresome our lives would have been if there were no vicissitudes therein nor death.

Question might arise that when God is Almighty, He might have created unalloyed happiness in this world. We think we have tried to answer this just now. Good and evil are intimately connected with the world and without the presence of both, the world would have been at a standstill.

At every step do we find the presence of a superior force, a destiny which through weal and woe is guiding the evolution of the universe surely and unmistakeably towards a definite goal, our littleness and helplessness by the side of this all-embracing force is palpable to us at every moment of our lives. Is not worship then the proper attitude of finite man towards this infinite substance or energy, call it what you like? It is the privilege of man to worship and contemplate upon that Infinite Being, "from whom this universe proceeds, in whom it rests, and to whom it returns. He is Iswara, Eternal, the Pure, the All-mercifull, the Almighty, the

Ever-free, the All-knower, the Teacher of all teachers, the Lord who of His own nature is inexpressible Love."

In our pursuit after happiness we find ourselves chasing the will -o'- wisp of happiness which always eludes us, and we gradually come to learn that in matter there is no happiness, our hearts then yearn after God in whose worship we find the reality. This happiness is perfectly free. It is bliss. There is no happiness which can be compared with that derived from the love of God. "Thinking of God, some weep, some sing, some laugh, some dance, some say wonderful things but all speak of God" If God does not exist what then moves so many men? Arguments and reasonings cannot show us God. He is realisable only by supersensuous or soul-perception.

The real reason for our search after God is the innate tendency to find out the real amidst the unreal. Whatever we see around us is unreal ; but at the same-time everything must have a substratum of reality which makes their existence possible. Our search after the real necessarily leads us to God. The real and the unreal are interrelated, and God though not separate from the universe, is different from it in the same sense as fire is different from its power to burn, water from its coldness, magnet from its power to attract, matter from consciousness. "Brahman" is Pure Consciousness. The universe is consciousness acting through matter. Any other definition excepting the Vedantic one is beyond human conception. The Panchadasi says :

समष्टिरीशः सर्वेषां स्वात्मतादात्म्यवेदनात् ।

तदभावात्तत्तीत्यन्ते तु कथ्यन्ते व्यष्टिसंज्ञया ॥

The Lord is the whole as He feels the unity of His own consciousness with the consciousness of each (individual), while everything else (the individual) is called the part as it is wanting in this consciousness. As the Jivatma or the human soul indicates an "I," so the Soul of the universe, or Parabrahman is indicative of God. As the human soul is not separate from the body, so God is not separate from the universe. That is why the Hindu scriptures hold that God is always present in everything, that all things are parts of God and that salvation lies in realising the unity of the Supreme self with the Individual. The Panchadasi puts the matter in a nutshell :

अस्ति ब्रह्मति चेद् वेद परीक्षज्ञानमेव तत्  
 अहं ब्रह्मति चेद्दे साक्षात्कारः स उच्यते ।  
 तत् साक्षात्कार सिद्धार्थमात्मतत्त्वं विविच्यते  
 येनायं सर्व्वसंसारान् सद्य एव विसृज्यते ॥  
 कूटस्थो ब्रह्मजीविशिवित्येवं चिन्ततुर्विधा ।  
 घटाकाश महाकाशौ जलाकाश भये यथा ॥

That there is God is indirect knowledge. That "I am that" (Brahman) is direct wisdom. For the realisation of this unity, it is necessary to enquire into the nature of the Self. This realisation frees the individual from the bondage of all changes. As the same "space" gets its definition from the different objects such as a pot, the water, or the clouds, so the same consciousness is variously called the pure, changeless consciousness, the Brahman consciousness, the individual consciousness.

or the God consciousness according to the nature of the vehicles through which it acts.

Whatever may be the diversity of opinions about the conception of God in different religions, we must not forget that Iswara is one. This has ever been taught in the religious books of the Hindus and has prevented the origins of different ethical schools in India such as have sprung up in the west. The Vishnu Purana very aptly says.

सृष्टिस्थित्यन्तकरथाद् ब्रह्मविष्णुशिवान्निकाम्  
स संज्ञां याति भगवान् एक एव जनाईनः ।

Thus the One only God, Janardana takes the designation of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, according as He creates preserves and destroys. He is the cause of creation, preservation and destruction.

There is only one God hidden in all beings, all pervading, the inmost self in all. "As one sun illuminates the whole world, so the Lord of the Field illuminates the whole Field, O Bharata !" There may be thousands of separated places but the one sun shines into all, so the Jivatmas though separated from each other are but the rays from the one Sun, portions of the one Atma one self.

Blessed are those who has love for God. When a Bhakta (devoted) has this love for Iswara, he does not want anything else, because he has got All ; happiness and misery are alike to him ; the world is God, he loves it and is kind to all. From this worship and love of God alone proceeds the real universal brotherhood.



## CHAPTER VI.

### Knowledge and Faith.

The word knowledge (জ্ঞান) has been more than once referred to in the foregoing pages, but it has not been discussed at length. The ordinary view in this subject is that knowledge is an inborn or an innate faculty by which man ascertains the truth, and that knowledge has the determination of truth as its sole aim. But, in fact, truth is not the result of knowledge, because the real state of a thing or what it essentially is, is its truth and knowledge is merely the realisation of that truth. Truth is the object of knowledge, and knowledge is another name for finding out or determining the real state or the truth of things.

There can be no knowledge without its object, or rather knowledge has an objective basis. Truth exists eternally but knowledge of it is not inborn in man. Truth can exist without knowledge, but knowledge cannot without truth: for example, the truth that the mode of motion called electricity is very swift, exists and is true for all ages, but man has had no knowledge about it only a few years ago. But there is no human knowledge which has not some object or objective reality for its basis or substratum. Since there can be no knowledge without a corresponding object, how then can it be called inborn or innate in man? Knowledge widens and man acquires knowledge about things when these come within the ken of his senses and faculties. Knowledge thus varies with the environments and circumstances amidst which

one is placed. Thus those living near the sea have a direct and definite knowledge about it, while those who live inland have not. In the same way the mountaineers have knowledge about mountains, the inhabitants of cold climates have knowledge of snow, the forest people have knowledge of the wild animals as is not possible for others not similarly situated. This is because they have opportunities to come in direct contact with these things oftener than others. We cannot possibly acquire any knowledge about things we have not sensed or contacted. True we know things from hearing from others, but this knowledge is second hand - a different thing altogether. So when there can be no knowledge without a real object, how can truth be ascertained by means of knowledge? In fact if knowledge is the means of ascertaining truth, it would not have differed with place and time, and everyone would have acquired knowledge of everything irrespective of circumstances and surroundings. Hence reality is not ascertained by knowledge. It supplies the materials of knowledge and is an invariable antecedent to it. The knowledge acquired depends on the object as it exists under certain circumstances and in certain surroundings. It may be argued that if object is the cause of knowledge, why does not every body acquire knowledge to the same extent? Objects exist eternally, why then cannot the animals acquire knowledge of things as man can? So that it must be admitted that there is in man some inborn power in which the properties of objects are reflected. The power that mirrors forth truth

in man is knowledge. Therefore knowledge expresses the truth. This innate power the other animals lack in, and that is why the inferior animals cannot acquire knowledge to the same extent as man. Therefore the power which expresses the truth being natural to man, why should we not say that knowledge also is innate and natural to him? In reply it may be urged that there is no such single power or faculty in man with the aid of which alone he can acquire knowledge : because if he had any, then the various and divergent properties of things could have been known in the one and the same way, thus, the beauty of the peacock, the melody of songs, the sweetness of sugar, the fragrance of flowers, the burning properties of fire and so forth would have been known simultaneously. But such is not the case. The beauty of the peacock is capable of being realised by the eyes alone and with no other sense organ : the ear alone can catch the melody of songs : the tongue is the only organ to enjoy the sweetness of sugar : the fragrance of the flowers can be sensed only by the nose and the power of touch alone can feel the burning properties of fire and so on. If any particular human faculty had been the cause of all knowledge then it could not have been so. The alleged want of this faculty in the inferior animals would have then resulted in the total want of knowledge in them, and the loss of knowledge in the lunatics would have invariably led to the total loss of the powers of the senses. Again a human child would have acquired all knowledge as soon as it was born, and man would have

gained the perfect knowledge of things as soon as his senses came in contact with them. But when it is found that the inferior animals do acquire knowledge of everything which they are in need of, nor are the lunatics deprived of the powers of their senses even for a moment, and the human child cannot acquire knowledge except through education and experience, and that the learned people are mistaken at every step in the acquisition of knowledge, how is then knowledge to be regarded as inborn in man? How can it be seriously maintained that man alone as against the inferior animals has the power of acquiring it? If, in fact, truth could be ascertained by man's inborn faculty of knowledge, then we could have known as to what God is; what this creation is in reality. One would have known the purpose of God,—why does He bring us to life and then make us go through the throes of death? Why has He made all the laws of the universe finite, conditioned and hence defective? Such and other queries would have been perfectly intelligible to us. But knowledge with regard to these or even an enquiry after them is deemed to be so futile as to lead men to deride the enquirer as a lunatic. If every kind of truth can be ascertained by knowledge, such treatment would not have been possible and an honest enquiry into these problems would have been natural to man. In fact truth is not obtained by knowledge, but by knowledge we find out the truths which are ever existent, and as the truth about man's origin and destiny &c. are supersensuous, an enquiry into them is thought to be idiotic and even insane.

The sense organs alone cannot give us knowledge. We have other powers which generally go by the name of the faculties of understanding such as, memory, concentration, comparison, imagination and others. In order to gain knowledge, the aid of those faculties are absolutely necessary. Senses alone without intelligence (बुद्धि) cannot elaborate knowledge that is why one acquires knowledge in proportion to his intelligence. The lower animals having very little intelligence can not acquire knowledge to the same extent as man. But things which are not within the ken of the senses cannot be the objects of knowledge and no man can therefore acquire any knowledge of things supersensuous.

It is clear therefore that knowledge is not inborn with us. Some people think that because knowledge is acquired, none of the faculties is innate in man, but all of them are acquired under stress of environment, circumstances and so forth. This is a mistake, for knowledge is not the exercise of a faculty, but is an acquisition or attainment. Our possessions may be acquired but no faculty can, just as though the smell of particular flowers can be acquired through the sense of smell, but the faculty of smell cannot be acquired.

If knowledge is only another name for ascertaining truth, then all knowledge ought to be true, but that is not so. The chief obstacles to the acquisition of true knowledge are the fewness of our wants, the easy satisfaction thereof, the imperfection of the sense-organs and the complexity and interrelation of objects. The only want that the baby feels is that of food, and as the pain of

hunger is alleviated by the sucking of its mother's breast, the child acquires the knowledge that all pain is mitigated by that process. Man can see the stars in the sky with the naked eyes and acquires the knowledge that the stars are very small like tiny pieces of diamonds studded all over the sky and fixed in the particular positions which they seem to occupy. The sense-organ can carry us no further in the direction of precise knowledge and a mistaken idea is thus acquired. In fact, the stars are not so small, but they appear to be so owing to the great distance from which we see them, nor is any star fixed in the position in which it appears to be for it is well-known to the student of Physical Science that light does not travel in a straight line. But the mere sense-organ of sight cannot help us in acquiring this knowledge. A chemical combination of Mercury and Sulphur gives a dark color, so we come to the conclusion that such a combination can give rise to that colour only. But further research brings into light the fact that a combination of the same substances can, under certain circumstances, give rise to a deep red colour also.

Thus thousand and one things stand in the way of our acquisition of truth. Specially new knowledge is dependent on the data of previously acquired knowledge. Unless certain truths have been established before-hand, certain other truths cannot be known, just as the propositions of Euclid cannot be established unless they are studied in the order in which the previous ones are given in the book. To ascertain the size of the stars we must

we must first know that objects at a distance appear smaller, and that the sizes of objects vary according to distance, and such other truths, otherwise we are sure to make mistakes. Because new knowledge is dependent on previously acquired knowledge, man comes to think that Reality is ascertained by knowledge. But although in Geometry we find that the succeeding propositions cannot be proved without the aid of the preceding ones, yet it is not the previous propositions, but the axioms or the self-evident facts upon which they stand, which ultimately prove all Geometrical truths. The same rule holds good in ascertaining the truth. Although the acquisition of knowledge depends upon the retention in memory and application of previously acquired knowledge, it cannot be said that knowledge is the cause of truth, for the contact of object with the sense-organs is the real cause of arriving at the truth regarding an object. Hence there can be no knowledge of objects which are beyond the ken of the senses.

True knowledge or the ascertainment of truth depends upon the following conditions: The objects which we are trying to know must be capable of being perceived by the senses and of affecting the organs, the powers of the object must be transmitted through perfectly responsive sense-organs, and react on the mind without suffering in any way by the process. The necessary previous steps to the acquisition of such knowledge must have been cognised by the mind according to the order or natural sequence. The slightest variation from the aforesaid conditions would produce error. To

gain knowledge we must know the synthetic as well as the essential properties of things, their mutual actions as well as their real nature. Thus to have real knowledge, one must have the appropriate sense-organs and intellectual faculties, there must be the proper sequence of knowledge which will lead step by step from truth to truth in addition to the relationel and real nature of objects just now mentioned. Otherwise instead of real knowledge we shall land in untruth. Causes of error are manifold and are not limited to those just enumerated. Wrong inferences and hasty imaginings are potent causes of error. Thus a man purchases an animal, and subsequently all the members of his family fall ill, he would attribute the event to the animal, as he has no knowledge of the real causes of diseases. One sees the variegated colors of the rainbow on an evening sky, and the next moment hears the roar of thunder, and not knowing the real cause of these natural phenomema, imagines that the Cloud-God Indra hurls down the shafts from his bow. Thus wrong inferences and imagination lead to manifold errors.

Knowledge acquired by man, real or false, produces a conviction of truth, or appears to be true. It will at once be apparent that anything that we come to know is true, for knowledge is ever acquired by the direct contact of the senses and the intellect with objects. The certainty of direct or immediate knowledge presses heavily upon us, and we cannot imagine that what we have known is not true. But those who have experience in the matter know full well that everything



that we apparently know is not true. Many things which had been taken as absolutely true by the learned people of old, have been subsequently discovered to be false and so discarded. Even within the range of our own experience we have discovered that what we had formerly known to be true has subsequently been proved to be false. Under this state of things the conclusion naturally arises that there is no finality in human knowledge, and that knowledge is the result of and is ever verifiable by experience. Scientists of the present day are more cautious and are ready to admit that the truths they have carefully ascertained are subject to modifications with further increasing knowledge. They are perfectly conscious of the limitation of human knowledge due to our imperfections, and the complexity or interrelation of objects of knowledge. and are ready to admit that real knowledge is almost impossible for man. But there are people who think that the knowledge acquired by them is true, however erroneous it might really be. They do not seem to take into consideration the limitations of human knowledge and regard their knowledge as infallible and would not listen to any arguments against their settled convictions. They think that their knowledge is in-born with them, or that it is the result of certain innate faculties which are gifts of God, and, as such, is above the possibility of error. That is why they consider the knowledge acquired by them as final, and do not see any need of putting it to test or in any way verify it.

The knowledge which thus appears to be true,

independent of any critical test and without possibility of doubt as it were, is termed Faith. In fact the origin and *modus operandi* of knowledge and faith are the same. Faith like knowledge may be true as well as false, because faith will be true or false according as the knowledge on which it is based is real or otherwise. Faith is not a faculty of the mind nor is inborn with us, it is only another name for knowledge, the only difference being that while knowledge depends upon a critical test, faith is regarded as being independent of experience and verification. Faith that stands on authority is not faith. Logic and arguments may be tolerated in knowledge but faith does not brook all such interference. Knowledge admits of change and is therefore progressive, while faith is final and is therefore immutable. Knowledge has no firm hold on the heart being progressive and changing, while faith gets hold of the heart being constant, and becomes man's second nature. Knowledge sees, but faith is blind. Knowledge is ever progressive but faith is conservative. Knowledge is based on truth, faith on trust and though what was once regarded as truth has since been established to be incorrect, faith remain unshaken as ever. So again what is regarded as true may in future come to be seen as untrue. But even then those who stand on faith would refuse to accept them as untrue. Since knowledge accepts the findings of reason, argument and experiment, it can be proved to be based on untrue and false premises, but faith which does not accept these tests can never be proved to be false. As a

fact neither knowledge nor faith is wholly true or wholly false. Both of them contain elements of the true and false unions.

If faith were an unerring inborn rational faculty, then all men should have the same kind of faith, and it would have shown or manifested itself from infancy. But we find that a Hindu, a Mahomedan and a Christian boy differ from each other immensely in their faiths. So that we are justified in saying that faith is not an inborn faculty of man, but is the product of education. Moreover, faith like knowledge is dependent on objects, as we can have no faith in the abstract without the concrete objects, and as the latter are not inborn with us, how can faith be so? It is clear, therefore, that faith is intimately connected with the knowledge of objects, as what we know to be true of them we necessarily believe to be true. How did the universe come to be? Almighty God has created it. How does the physical body think? Because the soul which is conscious vivifies it. All these beliefs have been acquired as the result of the accumulated experience of ages, and their truth or falsehood depends upon the nature and extent, accuracy and range of these experiences. Similarly the belief in Divine retribution is the result of the harmful tendencies of actions such as would injure our neighbours. But as we do not find all such offences punished in the present life, we believe that they will inevitably be punished in an after-life. Our superstitions, as also the articles of faith are but the result of conscious or unconscious generalisations from experience.

Thus it is abundantly clear that faith is a particular mode or resultant of knowledge, and is entirely dependent on objects, its sole function being the ascertainment of truth. Faith is knowledge with the sense of its uniformity, stability and invariability.

From the foregoing considerations it is clear that the purpose and foundation of both knowledge and faith are the same, but faith by its rejection of all critical tests appears as antagonistic to knowledge, and that is why knowledge is thought to be nearer the truth and thus superior to contemporaneous or preceding faith. But that is no reason for rejecting faith altogether, because without an element of faith we cannot have that fervour which is essential to successful activity. Faith, though inferior to reason in quality, in the liability to errors, is more intimately connected with the heart, the inner nature, and has always been a strong motive power in man stirring him to actions. Men of wise deliberations are good in advice but they are seldom men of action, whereas strong beliefs necessarily lead to appropriate actions. So far as canons of conduct are concerned there is not much difference between the two, but the actions of the speculative though finer, are enormously deficient in volume and intensity compared to the actions of the man of belief. The man of faith would not be satisfied unless he gives his all in charity, while the wise man will ponder twice over the fitness of the recipient before parting with the smallest farthing. Drinking is held to be wrong by both. But a faithful Hindu would not even touch it, while the wise man would never hesitate to take

an honest peg if circumstances require it. Patriotism is a civic duty according to both, but the faithful would be ready to lay down even his life for his country which the wise man cannot. The wise man in all his actions thinks of himself in the first instance, and only secondarily of the world, while the faithful works in utter disregard of his own self. That is why the faithful can do things which are almost impracticable to those who are without faith. Devotion and love are the companions of faith and the joy unutterable which these bring in with them is unknown to the ever-deliberative.

All men are not equally fitted for acquiring knowledge, neither is it practicable for any body to acquire knowledge of everything at first-hand. It is through education that some can acquire knowlege. But the life of man is three score and ten, and he has to spend the greater part of his life in the discharge of the sterner duties of actual life. The little time that is left for other purposes can be conveniently utilised for the acquisiton of knowledge only by a few. So that men have to depend mostly on faith. Without it there would be no possibility to acquire any knowledge at all. We shall speak of this later on in the chapter on Education. For another reason faith is vitally necessary. Knowledge is not reflected in the same degree in all. The acquisition of knowledge depends upon the habitual constitution of the human mind. A kind-hearted man is pained to see any animal or man killed, so he considers such conduct improper and in his view the highest religion consists in not doing any harm to any body. A cruel

man on the other hand is not pained in the least to injure others even for a comparative trifling benefit to himself. To the weak and the coward, unfit for strife and stress of life, forgiveness is the highest virtue while the strong and the self-respecting consider strife to be necessary where wealth or reputation is at stake. The lover thinks it his duty to sacrifice himself if necessary for his beloved, while the self-centered would not hesitate to enjoy himself at the expense even of his wife and children. In this way knowledge depends upon the constitution of the mind, and if men had to wait for the acquisition of first-hand knowledge without taking in any way the help of faith and belief, life would be impossible to live and moral advancement an impracticability. The moral sense of a man evolves only if actions are done according to his innermost convictions. So again nationality, society and religion have their roots more in faith than on knowledge. Without faith nothing is possible, and that is why every scripture claims to have been revealed by God. The soul of religion lies in the faith in the words of God. The Hindu, the Mohomedans, the Christians claim the Vedas, the Koran and the Bible as their respective revelations. The modern Brahmo religion also has in spite of its early protestant spirit has introduced an element of faith by invoking the authority of the *Upanishads* and relying on the inspiration of some of its well-known teachers.

If faith is so essential shall we do away with knowledge altogether? They are so antagonistic that the presence or accentuation of the one necessarily involves the absence or derogation of the other. How can faith stand

if it is proved by reason to be false ? So that if we are to take our stand absolutely on faith, reasoning and judgment must be banished altogether and the acquisition of knowledge stopped. How then would man evolve ? Could it not necessarily involve the loss of the very fine quality which marks out man ? Man is to evolve for ever and evolution is dependent on knowledge. The Aryan sages have avoided this difficulty by inventing the caste system. In order to avoid conflict between knowledge and faith, they have ordained that the Brahmans shall acquire knowledge and the rest shall profit by it through faith. In this way all will derive the benefit of knowledge without giving up faith.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### EQUALITY AND FREEDOM.

The western view which also is the view of the educated youths of this country now-a-days is that God has equally endowed man with powers and has given free-will to all to the same extent. The misuse or abuse of liberty has produced inequality of position and opportunities, and has been the source of the sufferings. If all men would make good and proper use of their capacities and opportunities, they would be equally good and happy. It is necessary to examine the correctness of this view. It has been in a manner proved to be erroneous in the chapter on God, and will be more fully dealt with in the present chapter.

Liberty, (the Sanskrit equivalent of which स्वाधीनता means dependance on one's own self only) means acting according to one's own will, and as such man can never have it, because man is a social being depending very largely on the co-operation of his fellow creatures, and possessing bodies and faculties widely divergent from one another. When the will of one individual clashes with that of others how is it possible for them to act according to their individual wills? Man has often to act against his will in deference to that of others: there can then be no freedom for man capable of being freely exercised.



The conflict in the individual wills is apparent even in the search for desirable objects. For every such object there are hundreds of candidates, and hence the desire of a large number must remain unsatisfied, and the freedom of the majority, the right to live as they will, must therefore give way and is ever restricted by the will of the few. Thus in the search after name and fame, self and power, of married happiness, the majority are ever disappointed and have to accept defeat, which shows that in the majority the freedom is really non-existent or at best is negligible in quantity. Thus in order to maintain one's own freedom, that of others must be ever so little restricted or curtailed. Again in order to satisfy the impulse of anger, forgiveness must remain temporarily at least in abeyance. Thus does selfishness militate against the impulse of self-sacrifice. Freedom of man as a whole cannot be maintained by allowing free scope of activity to particular faculties only. Real freedom must therefore consist in being able to act according to the trend of all the faculties which a man possesses according to his total nature. Man, as a matter of fact, has not been destined by God to be independent and free. Has it been so, everybody would have been in a position to do as he liked, and there would have been nothing to thwart him. Especially when you hold that every body is endowed with equal powers and is independent, it cannot consistently be maintained that any other person can in any way interfere with one's actions; misuse of liberty has thus no sense in it. When you say that men are equally

endowed with independence and powers, you imply that their actions would be similar. If one could misuse it, so could the others also to the same extent. To say that some might misuse and some might not, holding at the same-time that they are equally endowed, would be to attribute a plurality of effects to the self-same cause which would be utterly irrational. There being, however, all the differences between man and man with respect to his activities and opportunities, it must either be said that all men are not equally endowed, or that they have not equal liberty. How can human liberty be said to be either natural or God-given when we find men aspiring to things which they have not the powers to reach? How shall such unreasonable desires of men be fulfilled and their liberty maintained? It is always found that man ever seeks to keep sufferings at an arm's length and never desires to die even at an advanced and ripe old age, but it is clear that it could never have been the intention of God that man shall live for ever and be ever happy. If God had willed that man should have inherent liberty, such unreasonable desires could never have arisen, or he must have been able to perform what he willed to do.

Some maintain that it is not our look out to consider whether our desires are fulfilled or not. An unreasonable desire would bring its own sufferings, and man is always at liberty to do what he thinks proper. Man has this liberty which we may call his freedom of choice, and it is not at all necessary that he should be able to determine the external conditions and relations according to

his internal choice. We have no right to interfere with the doings of the others. Everybody is responsible for himself. Pain or pleasure whatever is his lot does not in the least concern any body else; none else has the right to interfere with his freedom, of choice, the right to interfere with another's freedom if it would injure or harm him. We are afraid such liberty wont work at all, because we never find any human activity which does not concern others in some way or other, for it must be either beneficial or prejudicial to the society, amidst which we live and move. Every action of ours is interrelated with the action of others. Certain actions appear at the first sight to be unconnected with society but a careful examination would show them to be otherwise. Even if for the sake of argument it is conceded that there are certain actions purely individualistic and self-regarding, the difficulty still remains in sifting those from the others which are undoubtedly communistic. Even if it be possible thus to discriminate clearly between the different sphere of our actions, will this partial freedom, or freewill satisfy the necessity for freedom as the universal attribute of humanity?

In fact man has no free will to that limited extent even, because in that case there can be no differentiation between vice and virtue, good and bad. If free will is a gift of God, it implies that He has given us an absolute choice in doing acts good or bad. So that no question of merit or demerit can arise. If it does, the theory of freewill falls to the ground, because, put in other words, it would imply that man is compelled by the law, governing

effects of actions, to do good act and has thus no real choice or freewill left to him. Beside this theory of equality and liberty would do away with the difference between man and man. It is difference which constitutes his humanity, nay even his animality.

All these considerations lead us on to the inevitable conclusion that man has no freewill. Personal liberty is a relic of the savage state of man. We shall hereafter try to explain more in detail how human actions must necessarily be communistic.

It being established that man has no freewill, any misuse of it cannot be the cause of the disturbance of equality. In fact, God has not endowed man with equal powers or equal rights in all matters. Again the doctrine of freewill applies to man only, and not to other animals or vegetables. Why are the animals then so unequal? It does not require any great effort on our part to see that the inequality is not confined to man alone; it is universal, it is the law of manifestation. In fact no object in the universe ever resembles another in all respects and details. The twins, which sometimes produce much outward confusion with regard to their identity, carry surprising points of difference in them. So difference or inequality is the will of God, the order of nature.

Differentiation creates. In fact there can be no universe without differences. Even if that were possible, then there would have been terrible monotony all over. It is possible to distinguish one thing from another by their differences only. If all the things were alike, it

would have been impracticable to differentiate between them, and any one taken at random would serve the same purpose. Again there can be no evolution if all things are alike. Owing to their having the self-same powers, things will ever act in the self-same way, and there will be only one kind of things and actions in the universe.

There cannot be homogeneity except before creation and after the final dissolution of universe. That condition may be said to be homogeneous in which nothing but a mere potentiality remains. As creation starts there appear differences. From space (आकाशः) is produced air (वायु), from air heat, from heat water, and from water earth. From the earth gradually come the organic or inorganic forms of matter such as stones, metals, vegetables, worms and insects, birds and beasts, and lastly man. The powers of differentiation increase as evolution proceeds. In civilised man we find the greatest heterogeneity. The higher the civilisation the greater the diversity of individuals. The heterogeneity amongst inanimate objects of the same class is very little in vegetables of the same class it is comparatively greater, in birds and beasts it is still greater, in savage man it is still more marked, in civilized man it reaches the culminating point. It is rather hard to detect differences in organic matters, iron or gold is the same all the world over. The component and inorganic matters show greater diversity. Some land is fertile, some not, some climates are healthy and salubrious, while others are not and so on. In vegetables this process of differentiation advances. These differences are still more patent

in animals. In the same class, one is fat, another lean, one pretty to look at, another horrid-looking, one docile, another ferocious, one weak, another strong. In man this differentiation reaches its acme, but in the savage state it is not so prominent as in the civilised. The difference between the highest and the lowest in the savage state does not in any way compare with that in the civilised state. The only differentiating factor amongst savages consists in their possession of varying degrees of natural powers. The strongest amongst them is the king, and the only difference between him and the others lies generally in physical strength only. In other respects, *e. g.* enjoyment, habitation, dress, knowledge, they are identical. But in the civilised societies, the differences between individuals become very prominent.

In this matter we would take the example of the English people, the author of the doctrine of equality of rights, and not that of the Hindus because by their institution of the caste, an artificial difference has been created. Just compare an English millionaire with a poor man—the latter without a home and a family, without food and clothing, without education has got to toil from the early morning to the late evening to earn a narrow pittance to maintain himself, while the rich in his home, his dress, his mode of living seems to be of a different type of humanity.

A peon earns Rs. 10 a month, while the chief judge earns thousands. While one is given to drinking and swearing as a savage, another is closetted in his study with Bacon and Mill immersed in highsoaring thoughts

and aspirations. Thus it appears that the differences amongst men in civilised societies are very great, and this constitutes the speciality of mankind, this is the sign of civilisation and progress, the sign of life. If evolution is to be the special features of humanity and the will of God, these differences are the necessary corollaries, because civilisation and progress must bring into marked prominence the differences between the more and less developed man.

A consciousness of one's own inferiority to others begets a desire to improve one's present condition, which leads to attempts, and ends in progress and civilisation. "We progress not in pursuit of a freely chosen end, such as an earthly paradise, but in obedience to a dire law of our nature and because we must. Under pressure from behind and from around, we are constrained to live better in order to live at all ; to advance in order not to perish. Apart from such pressure we are inert and even retrograde. We kick against the goad that spurs us on to effort and conflict. Once forced into the battle, our love of conquest may become a passion with us. We prefer to think we are actively pursuing an end rather than passively obeying an impulse." If all were born with the same powers, everybody could have equalled one another by his effort, and pain and pleasure would have been equal to all. There would have been no attempt for the fulfilment of desires, and there would have been no progress and the condition of man would have been worse than that of the lower animals. Thus lesser the differences between the

units of society, the more does it indicate the nearness to barbarism, inertia and animalism, while greater the differences, the greater the incentives to progress and civilisation which constitute the speciality of mankind.

If God intended equality, there ought to have been a sameness in actions and enjoyments, and in the life of men. But it is not so. One lives to the mature age of a hundred years, another dies as soon as he is born. Amongst the belongings of man his lease of life is the most valuable, for on it depends every other action in life, and without it happiness and progress would be out of question. Without some form of life either in this world or else-where, action would be impossible, and so also the results which usually flow out of them. This difference in the periods of life cannot be attributed to man's fault. Man is not supposed to be in possession of powers so invincible as to nullify the laws of God. Besides, are such powers capable of being exercised in all conditions, such as while the child is in its mother's womb? Moreover if man has such powers they must have been bestowed by God, else, where does man get such powers to go against the will of God?

It is never the will of God that everybody should live up to the same age. In spite of the innumerable untimely deaths, man has never enough food for all. Famines, epidemics and wars depopulate the earth, but all the same, food is never plenty. If all people lived to a thousand years, and had children and grand-children, it would have been an impossibility to supply all of them with plenty of food and even living space. So the



same lease of life is never intended by God for all, as there is not sufficient accommodation and food for all of them. This has been very ably demonstrated by Malthus. That it is why the Aryan sages have said that the age to which one can live is fixed and immutable for each, and he shall have to die when the limit is reached; this means that everybody lives according to his measure of vitality dependent on his actions in past lives.

It may be further seen that equality can never be intended by God to be the law of nature. One uniform type of people can never satisfy the requirements of and constitute social life. Variety in types is unavoidably required, and as such the difference in the conditions of man must be taken to be the will of God. The king and the labourer, the prince and the sweeper can never be equals. In reply to this it may be contended that even if an all-embracing equality is not the will of God there can be equality at least in the matters of food, residence, education and so forth. But this is manifestly irrational, because the constituent elements of man being different, their activities must necessarily differ, and to say that the effects must be the same, notwithstanding the difference in the causes, is to go against the first principle of Reason. Stone cannot be as hard as iron, nor brass as bright as gold, or earth as smooth as glass, and water as hot as fire. It does not stand to reason that the mastery and control gained by the strong and the evolved would be the same as that of the weak, and that the appearances of the beautiful and

the ugly would be the same, or that the fool can be educated to the same extent as the intelligent, or that the productions of a poet, a painter or a singer would be the same as that of one totally ignorant of these arts. Even the earnings of the two classes must necessarily differ and consequently their conditions in life. Equality in condition is thus not the order of nature, and it is absolutely idle to preach the doctrine.

Is there no place for the weak and the unfit on this earth? Have they been created by God merely to suffer? It has been seen that men have no free-will nor have they any right or capacity to be the equals of one another. Does it therefore mean that the weak shall always be under the mercy of the strong? If it is admitted that man has no free-will, then neither the weak nor the strong has it. Thus nobody can act to the fullest extent his will and capacity : so as to encroach upon the rights and possessions of others or interfere with other's liberty. Man comes to occupy various positions in life according to his powers and it is not given to another to hinder or interrupt him in the enjoyment of that possession. When one has not the power to do a certain thing but has the power to do something else, none can prevent him from doing so. God has not given equal powers to all, but whatever powers he has given to any individual, the latter has a right to exercise so long as they do not clash with the rights of others. To safeguard that right is independence. The caste system of the Hindus is intended to safeguard this independence. This system maintains the equality and independence of man .

to such an extent as is compatible with social life and that is the secret of Indian thought endowing individuals with the largest amount of equality as compared with other countries. This will be discussed on the chapter on Caste system.

Lastly it might be objected that if God is said not to have given equality to man, He must be deemed to be partial, and in fact to remove this apparent blemish on the work of God, the theory of equality has been propounded. But this objection rests on very flimsy grounds. What do you mean by saying that God must be partial unless He gives equal power to all? In that case the whole scheme of creation is inequality and the equality of man alone will not remove the manifold evidence of the partiality of Nature. There are other animals in the world besides man, and how would you explain their differences? It is clearly seen that the universe is full of differences and the possibility of an universe lies in difference on a basis of unity. Should we take recourse to imagination and sacrifice the reality for the sake of establishing the impartiality of God? But in fact there is no partiality in God. Because though there are differences in the external circumstances of man, the measure of happiness is equal for all. There is no difference in the happiness of the king and the peasant, whatever be the objects which produce this happiness. God has made us so that we get the same amount of happiness in whatever state we might happen to be. The palatial residence gives the same happiness to the king as does the humble hut

to the peasant. Silhan Misra, the Indian poet, has well sung.

इन्द्रस्याशुचिशूकरस्य च सुखे दुःखे च नान्ततरं  
स्वेच्छाकल्पनया तयोः खलु सुधा विष्टा च काम्याशनम् ।  
रम्भा चाशुचि शूकरौ च परमप्रेमास्पदं नृत्यतः  
संचासीऽपि समः सकर्ममतिभिन्नान्योन्यभावः समः ।

There is no difference between the happiness of the king of Gods ( Indra ) and of the unclean pig, because Indra drinks his nectar and the pig his excreta with equal relish and pleasure. Rambha, the dancing girl of the Gods is as much an object of endearment to the king of the Heavens as the she-pig is to her mate, and death is equally frightful to both.

The transition from a affluent to a indigent circumstances certainly brings sufferings to man, and the only remedy of this lies in the economy of the caste-system as will be shown more fully hereafter.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### DUTY. HOW TO ASCERTAIN IT.

The most important factor of human existence is action. So much so that it would be no exaggeration to say that action is the be-all and end-all of man's life. On action depend man's progress, degradation, happiness, sufferings, vice and virtues and in fact, everything. The truths regarding God which are considered to be the final goal of human life, the speculations regarding science and philosophy on which depend the specialities of humanity, education and morals which are the means of attaining to Divinity, are all intimately connected with actions. Not only of man, but of the rest of the creation, the ultimate aim and purpose is action. It is action alone which makes all the difference between man, brute and matter.

The Indo-Aryan sages have called this earth the field of action. That is why Shillhan Misra has bowed to action in exclusion of God and the Devas, and that is why the grammarians have held that no sentence is complete without the verb. Therefore our principal aim and object is to ascertain our duty and not merely to find the beginning either of God or of the universe. It will be apparent on a little consideration that the end we have in view in attempting to determine the proper conception of God and our relationship with Him is to

ascertain our duties in life. It is of no use to be able to determine the existence of God without ascertaining our duty. Suppose we come to know that God exists and what God is *per se*, but what do we gain thereby if our duties remain undetermined? How shall our aim be fulfilled? That is why the scriptures along with determining God have also fixed our duties, and the dutiful acts accordingly. But now-a-days people have lost their faith in the scriptures and thereby they fail to ascertain their duties; especially at present there are some scriptures which try to determine the existence of God and are silent on the problem of the duties of life. Thus every one has now to solve that out for himself.

The youths of the present age hold that God has implanted within us a certain faculty which presides there always and advises us as to our duty. It is termed "conscience," but there is no synonym for it in Sanskrit, so it has been variously rendered as "Inner consciousness" (अन्तःसंज्ञाः) "the consciousness of right and wrong." This faculty always points to us the right way. Actions approved by it, are right. We have found in the preceding pages that we are not possessed of any such faculty which points out the right path to us and we have also seen that knowledge is not inborn in us. Before we proceed to discuss what "conscience" is, it is necessary to form an idea of what duty is and what are its characteristics, else how can we test the dictates of our conscience? If the characteristics of duty consist only in following the dictates of conscience and

nothing else, then whatever the heart dictates must be regarded as the duty dictated by conscience. In that case every action becomes duty and there is none that may be called otherwise, because whatever a man does he does according to his will.

The propounders of the conscience theory say that all activities dictated by the human will are not dictated by conscience, there are many actions done against it which inevitably bring on subsequent sufferings; those actions only are to be deemed as dictated by conscience which bring no repentance in their train. But this goes against experience. One finds pleasure in a thousand and one misdeeds, while another repents even after a good one. The Mahomedans find pleasure in killing the infidels, the Shaktas in slaughtering men and animals and the Hindus in burning their widows alive (Sati), while another repents for having been reduced to poverty in attempting to benefit another or having injured himself in an attempt to save another life. Instances might be multiplied to any number to show that thousands of misdeeds give pleasure to some, while good deeds bring on repentance to others. Therefore it cannot be said that any pleasurable action is dictated by conscience.

In fact we don't realise the existence of any faculty in us which can persuade us to do what is right and restrain us from doing wrong. Bad food brings on diseases or death, so it is our duty not to take such foods, but there is no faculty of the mind which points us the right stuff to take. If we observe all the actions from

infancy to old age, not one of them will appear as dictated by conscience, but every one will appear as the result of experience. A child would gladly put his fingers in to the fire, play with snakes, eat anything poisonous, smash the necessary articles of use and do a lot of things considered as opposed to duty. If conscience were a natural and inborn faculty why then the child be devoid of it? Why does not conscience dissuade him from such acts? As the child grows he desists from many actions of his infancy, but there are many others that are still left. He gives up only those which appear to him to be harmful by experiments and which are taught as being harmful, but he is never for doing right in the absolute and real sense of the term. They are very unwilling to learn their lessons, they find a peculiar delight in eating things dangerous to life, and are after killing birds and animals even more than in infancy. When youth comes they take to the pleasures of the senses, they kill, they enjoy at the cost of themselves and others, never do they pause to think of anything good even in forgetfulness. It is only those who have been well-trained by their parents and teachers, devote themselves to good actions according to their training. How should this be considered as the dictates of conscience? It is clearly the result of education. Where comes in then the dictates of conscience? Every body acts as he has been trained and educated. The Hindus have been trained to look upon the Sati, idol worship, caste system &c. as objects of duty, while the Christians regard them as wrong. There are other things which



are sanctioned to a Christian but which appear wrong to a Hindu. If conscience were really the cause of the sense of right and wrong in man there could not possibly exist such differences in opinion. Especially when at some juncture we are at a loss to ascertain as to what course we should take, conscience makes no reply though appealed to. One waits for a longer period, still conscience does not come in and show the right way. The time is lost and the resultant action is productive of bad effects. It is also seen that a man repents for an act done after a great deliberation and caution while another reaps good results from immediate action. It is also seen that one gives up his education and addicts himself to evil ways, leads a mean life, acquires wealth and even turns to be religious. Thus it is seen that conscience does not manifest in childhood, in youth, and at the time of thinking man is under the control of education. How can then conscience exist at all? And even if it exists where lies the need of it? It cannot be said that the following of the dictates of a certain faculty is doing one's duty. We must seek elsewhere for its characteristics.

Whatever differences of opinion there might be regarding duty there can be no denial that it consists in acting up to the behests of God. The differences of opinion come in when we try to determine the behests. Every one agrees that God has given us His behests which determines our duty and that we can never know our duty all by ourselves. The difference lies here. Some maintain that God instructs us through the revealed

scriptures, others say that it is done through inspiration. Some maintain that the prophets are the chosen mediums, another hold that the conscience within us shows the way. So that it is admitted on all sides that God reveals our duty into us. But it has been contended that there is no direct proof as to the existence of conscience and any allied faculty within us or that the duties laid down in the scriptures were the dictates of God. How should we then know our duties?

Before we go further let us consider if duty belongs to human creation alone. There are people who hold that human creation alone has got to ascertain duty and not the other animals. It is obviously a mistake. Because duty has been defined as the carrying out of the behests of God, and to say that other animals have no duties is to hold that they are not required to carry out his behests. How then are they born and how do they live? Action is merely the expression of forces, and every object has force as given by God and every object does express that force or act according to it. It is the action and duty of every object to express that force. The action and duty of an object can be found out by observing the powers it has got. God has given force to objects according as the works they are intended to perform. Therefore duty consists in expressing the powers given by God. The power of magnet lies in attracting iron, this is its duty. The carnivorous animals have natural powers to kill and eat animals, it is their duty and action. So with human being also his duty consists in expressing his powers or

to act according to them. This shows that God has some end in view in endowing different objects with different powers.

Some will perhaps contend that if the expression of natural powers is deemed to be duty, nothing then will remain to be called 'non-duty.' This view will not hold good. Every action of every body is the outcome of natural powers. Unable to ascertain and harmonise one's own particular powers, one often acts with the result that those powers get atrophied. That is why a distinction has been drawn between action and duty though they mean the same thing. Action arising out of powers so far as it is consistent with reason and education is duty otherwise not.

An attempt will be first made to show how the animals are led to do their duty. A tiger has power to kill animals, admittedly it has power to kill man also, but it has no power to come into the society of man and kill him. So a dutiful tiger would never enter a village or town. If it does, it conducts itself very carefully, because it knows that it has embarked on an enterprise highly perilous and beyond its power. The jackal also has power to kill animals, but being weak it has no power to kill all sorts of animals, so it never attacks any stronger than itself. But it sometimes steals away the offsprings of the stronger ones, it knows then that it is acting beyond its powers and so becomes very careful. The cows and the buffaloes have powers to eat vegetables, but when they stealthily enter into the cornfields of man they are

very careful and take to their heels at the approach of man. A cat can eat the offals and the refuse of meat and fishes, but it has no right to take anything out of a dish, when it does so it runs off with the booty in such a manner which clearly indicates that it understands that it has tried something wrong or beyond its powers. Do not these instances show that the animals also have duty and it is necessary for them to ascertain it? If the tigers and the jackals never deemed it wrong to attack man, or the cows to poach into the cornfield, would it not have led to danger on both sides? In fact if the lower animals are not dutiful, then either man or the lower animals would have by this time be extinct. The propounders of the conscience theory hold that the animals have no faculty to determine right and wrong, if so, how do they determine their duties?

It may be said that the animals desist from doing any action in excess of their powers through the instinct of fear. In that case man's regard for duty may be attributed to the same cause, for it is found that man acts according to moral code for fear of punishments in this life or after. No body acts up to duty except through fear. Fear though natural always go by the side of knowledge. No one is afraid of anything unless he apprehends injury from it. That is why the children are not afraid of playing with snakes.

Independence consists in being able to express one's powers freely. Happiness (सुख) consists in being able to satisfy this independence. The state precedent to the expression of power is Will. So that it is clear that

the aim of man is to satisfy his will, he is satisfied if he attains happiness.

God has endowed every one with powers which are required for performing the kind of actions which He has willed to be done through him. Thus, acting according to the powers one is endowed with, constitutes the fulfilment of duty. But there are various kinds of powers gifted by God to man, so that he cannot be happy nor is his duty performed unless and until he can express all the powers inherent in him. But powers in man are so antagonistic to each other that the satisfaction of one involves the retrenchment of others. Thus to be happy and dutiful in one, he must necessarily be undutiful and unhappy in another, and to express his powers, he must curtail those of his fellow beings. To maintain the independence of one, that of another must be controlled. But as every one is created with an object in view, to do as willed by God, the aims cannot be fulfilled if any body's independence is curtailed. Our duty then lies in harmonising the conflicting powers in us. Then only could all the powers of every individual find their play and action. One force (बुद्धि) is always engaged in filling the stomach alone quite heedless of the nature of the food taken and the possibility of consequent diseases. If this faculty (शक्ति) is given free reins to, man soon finds himself in the clutches of disease and untimely death. Another power is always busy after guarding the body, it is always afraid of every article of food lest it should generate disease ; if it is followed the whole

body would get emaciated due to an insufficient supply of food and meet with death for total want of it. Therefore to live, a harmony must be brought between them, and the quality and quantity of food should be such as are not calculated either to overstuff the body or to starve it altogether. So that the aim of all natural laws in the universe is a compromise between the powers of one's own self with those of others and this is termed duty. The faculty which goes by the name of conscience is really the mediator in effecting this compromise.

Duties are of two kinds—individual and social. The former consists in effecting a compromise between or in harmonising the conflicting powers in an individual and the varying degrees of intensity in which he possesses them. The latter in harmonising the conflicting powers in the various units of the society and the varying degrees of strength of such powers in those units. Individual duty consists in harmonising the strong and weak faculties in one's own self. Different people are endowed with varying degrees of the passions. To harmonise the strong and the weak powers in different people is social duty.

Neglect either of the individual or of the social duty prejudicially affects not only the units, considered as individuals alone, but the society as a whole as well of which the individuals are the units. Again imitation of personal vices is a fruitful source of corruption of the society. Moreover, the society becomes a loser by not deriving any benefit which it would have got out of its individual unit which injures itself. History gives

numerous examples of this. It is thus the society is affected either for the better or for the worse according as its individuals are careful of performing their personal duties or not. That is why we have said that man has no personal freedom. It is needless to say that right or wrong to the society affects the individuals who stand as opponents to the society. It is not possible for the individual (part) to be benefitted at the cost of the society (whole).

If the harmony of powers be regarded as duty, does it mean to curtail the stronger faculties and to strengthen the weaker ones? We doubt if it is so. In that case there would have been no difference in the actions of different individuals. There would have been no hero, no great poet no mighty intelligence and nothing in fact above the average. There would have been an equality, a community of medium faculties only. Natural equality being impossible, how could we induce it artificially?

If all men were meant for the same kind of action, the existence of the different faculties would be meaningless. Harmony does not consist in making all men or all faculties equal. It would be clear if we consider the necessity of harmony. If the strong faculties are at work, the weaker ones find no scope at all. Balancing is therefore necessary in order that the action may be performed according to every faculty that exists. If all the faculties were made equal, the purpose of God in endowing a particular individual with a stronger faculty and another with a weaker one is absolutely frustrated. Therefore duty is that mode of balancing the faculty

which affords scope for play to each of them without reducing them to the same level. The stronger faculties must not be so exercised as to render the weaker ones impotent, that is to say let the activities of the stronger faculty be strong and that of the weaker ones be weak, but let none be absolutely starved out, this is duty and is the will of God. Let the brave do everything that courage demands, but let him not forget that self-defence is also necessary and let him always keep care and caution by his side. Let the kind-hearted be ever busy with altruistic works, but let him bear in mind that benefit to one's own self is also necessary. An attempt to equalise the mutually antagonistic strong and weak faculties means a perfect "deadlock" in action. Kindness would prompt sacrifice, self-interest would stand in the way. Courage would like to go forward, self-defence would pull back.

Social duty has got to be determined in the same way. Here we have not to equalise the strongest and the weakest by reducing the powerful and strengthening the weak, but to harmonise by making the stronger the leader and all the rest his followers. The harmony lies in the fact that the strongest shall not be justified in exterminating the others, he is to be regarded as their leader and the weak would occupy positions under him as followers in the order of their powers. The weak has no power to destroy the right of the strong to be the leader, nor has the strongest any power to destroy the rights of the weaker ones to be the followers. The same rule holds good in the case of the powerful and



the weak, the rich and the poor, the intelligent and the fool. If every one were to recognise and act according to his inherent strength, there could be no conflict with any body and nature could work on harmoniously.

It may be said that if every body were to act according to his powers, there would be no struggle and consequently no progress. We are inclined to hold quite the other way. Progress is sure to come, as want, which is unavoidable, is at the root of it and impels every one to strive after its satisfaction. If the weak instead of over-estimating their own strength and engaging in fruitless conflict with the powerful, were to try to evolve their own powers within reasonable limits to meet their own undivided wants, human evolution would have advanced in rapid strides, there being nothing to retard it. The doctrine of the equality of man does mischief to mankind by inciting the weak and the powerful against each other.

Others hold that all the faculties in man are acquired and none inborn, some others say that the majority of them are self-acquired. In that case how can we say that duty consists in harmonising the powers? Then we have got to acquire powers according to the nature of actions which we call our duty, and there must be some other characteristics of duty.

This is, we think, an error. Man has nothing to call his own. His body, life and other powers are all gifted by God. The superiority of man over the rest of the creation is due to the existence in him of a

greater number of the natural powers. When a man is not the master of himself (self-made), how can a part of him, his faculties and powers, be self-acquired? If objects have possibility to acquire new powers then surely could the stone or a horse be made a man by training. In that case one would not have been dark and another fair, one fat and another lean, one tall and another dwarf, and one sweet-throated and another harsh in tone. A black never renounces its color if a ton of soap were used over it, no amount of food would make a lean man fat, nor could the accompaniment of instruments mellow the harshness of one's voice to any appreciable extent. Power, therefore, cannot be acquired. When the outward features even cannot be changed, what proof is there that man can acquire mental faculties and powers? On the other hand it is found that a poet is always born and never made, and shows his powers even from his childhood. One who excels in mathematics is seen to be attached to its study from boyhood. There are unmistakeable indications of courage in a child destined to be a hero. Therefore there can be no doubt as to the natural faculties being at the root of all powers. Some powers are manifested through education but they are not really new. They are merely the weaker faculties which get an opportunity of being manifested and active on account of the the stronger and the more powerful ones being balanced through knowledge. It is principally in this that value of education lies.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### EDUCATION AND CONTROL.

We have not said anything as to how one may perform his duty in the preceding chapter, when we dealt with its characteristics and the method of its determination. It has been said that duty consists in bringing about a harmony between the powers, but the determination of the specific powers possessed by a particular individual, and of the way to determine them must depend upon experience. The weak never knows his weakness unless and until he tries his strength. The fool never knows himself before he is matched with the intelligent. One never knows the bad effects of a particular article of food unless and until he has suffered for taking it. Yet again the experiment which leads to the knowledge that something causes death is of no avail to the experimenter. So that it is clear that in order to form a correct estimate of one's own powers and his relationship with other persons and things, one must repeatedly fall into dangers, or see others falling into them. Even then the experience gained would be rather inadequate—the sum total of experience acquired in this way would not amount to anything appreciable even in old age, and such experience is liable to error in many respects as has been shown in the chapter on knowledge and faith. For this reason acquirement of knowledge by direct means alone would not

help us. Especially we can't afford to wait for 20 or 25 years to begin to do our duty which begins with our birth almost. But there is no adequate power in the child for acquiring the requisite knowledge. He is hungry but he never knows how to satisfy his hunger. He never eats unless he is trained to it, and when he learns to eat, he takes anything and everything and cannot differentiate between the good and the bad articles of food. Unless he is enjoined against eating too much and taking noxious food, he would never be dutiful in the matter of eating. Thus it is found that he has got to be trained in every action needed for the purposes of life, he must be made to do his duty by means of rewards and punishments, by approbation and disapprobation.

This training and control are not limited to childhood only, but the full-grown man requires it as well. No one becomes dutiful after having known the reason for his being so, but from motives of hope and fear. That is why so many devices have been invented for frightening the children and they are always lulled with promises of good food and good clothings. For the same reason the prospects of enjoyment in heaven and sufferings in hell, are potent in making men follow the path of duty, and the punishments of society have served the same purpose. No body, not even the learned philosopher can rise to the recognition of the truth without first passing through a stage of training and control. They are essential factors in the growth of humanity at all its stages. The majority of mankind cannot sacrifice the present to

future happiness nor are all men equally able to understand the future. Again certain tendencies are so strong in particular individuals that the latter can never subjugate them in actual life. All activities are due to nature, how can we then hope to conquer strong natural tendencies? The mighty and the powerful cannot always be humble and modest, nor the wrathful forgiving. The difficulty can only be avoided by education and control which effect a harmony between the various conflicting tendencies of man. They are thus the essential factors in human evolution.

True, education and control could never create any new faculty, but it could strengthen or weaken one already existing. In order to make a tree grow tall, the branches have got to be lopped off, a piece of iron has got to be reduced in width in order to make it long; the body becomes lean by constant exercise of the mind, and so the mind remains undeveloped if our attention is directed wholly to physical development; weapons lose their sharpness through disuse, the hangman becomes indifferent to human life by constant executions, so the faculty which is constantly exercised becomes sharp and strong, and those that are neglected become dull and weak.

As a weapon becomes sharp by grinding and blunt by disuse, so by training the higher faculties gain in strength while the lower ones are proportionately reduced. Education imparts the same gloss and beauty to the mind that ornaments and showy dress does to the body. Man's mind is expanded by education which

develops and perfects his faculties given by God. It refines the tastes, teaches to conquer the passions, frees the mind from narrow prejudices and base instincts. By training man knows the secret about the self, gains the power of harmonising the faculties and manifests the ordinarily dormant ones to such an extent, that the cultured man appears to be totally different from the uneducated, in fact it seems as if education has created altogether new faculties. Just as an ordinary piece of iron and a sword though constituted of the same materials, appear to be so different from each other as if they have nothing common between them, so the faculties of the savage and of the civilised man hide their kinship and manifest as made of totally different materials. The effects of culture in the case of agriculture is very well-known and although education creates nothing new, it purifies and sharpens other natural faculties to such an extent as to make them appear as new creations.

Now let us see what is meant by education and control. They bear the same relation to each other as does knowledge to faith. Just as knowledge ripening into faith edifies man, so education taking the form of control serves to teach humanity. Let us take education first and see what it means, and whether every body is in a position to learn and put his learning to practice.

What is education? Does it mean merely reading and writing? Is education confined to the mastery of languages? Does it consist in orthography and knowing the meanings of words? In fact most men have no better

idea of education than as aforesaid. In India at the present moment higher education means a tolerably good knowledge of the English language which serves as a passport to some sort of employment to earn a living. The education of the clerk which is confined to good handwriting only is classed as passable, and one who can address one or two public meetings to decry the old customs of his countrymen, and is a curious medley of Indian and foreign elements in conversation and habits of life, is regarded as educated whether he does anything useful or not. It does not matter if he has not got any character or if he is an imbecile hanger-on, for is not his hatred towards everything ancient, one sure sign of his education ? One who had learnt by rote the Sanskrit grammar and dictionary and know a little of the Smritis was regarded as highly educated, and who was conversant with the ancient rites of the Hindus would be thought no less. But it is obvious that for real education, the one or the other of these things go but very little. "When a person studies only in order to repeat and copy, then he entirely misses the true art of learning. We should learn in order to expand our minds ; and we expand our minds in order that the true soul or man within, may have a further field of activity, a vaster scope for expression and manifestation. We should not learn in order to become walking encyclopædias, we should learn so as to provide for our own inherent genius to work upon. To learn and to practise are in many instances symonymous terms. It is proverbial that if you want to learn any art or science

you must practise it ; also that man only learns by experience, that is by practice."

A little consideration will show that knowledge and education mean the same thing, or in other words that the purpose of education is the acquisition of knowledge. The only difference between them is that the avenues of knowledge are merely the senses and the faculties of the mind, while something more is necessary for education. To assimilate the knowledge acquired by others is also called education. Art is long and time is short, and it would have been impossible for any man to acquire a minute fraction of the knowledge of this world if he had to depend upon his unaided efforts. At the present moment the accumulated knowledge of humanity has reached a point which it will be absolutely foolish to overlook, and the knowledge acquired first hand by the senses cannot stand in comparison to it. So at present knowledge means that which is acquired through education. But real knowledge does not consist in acquiring second-hand knowledge only. All that is learnt must be true, and to regard everything that is learnt as gospel truth is a most fatal mistake, because erroneous knowledge has been preached by not a few. So real education is very difficult of attainment and little learning is dangerous. Imperfectly educated cannot see the error of the subject learnt and do much harm by acting according to the erroneous teaching they have received. One who can get at the truth with the aid of his vast knowledge, the product of his education, is to be regarded as truly educated.



But how many can receive a sound education? Education is not the only factor in our life, we have got to perform the stern duties necessary for keeping the body and soul together. Our lives are so short that if the whole of it were spent in education alone, not even a minute iota of knowledge that is necessary for us would have been gained,—not to speak of mastering all the departments of knowledge. Even the man who devotes himself entirely to the acquisition of knowledge alone in exclusion of his other duties, cannot spend even  $\frac{1}{20}$ th part of his life on it. The periods of infancy, old age, disease, sorrow, sleep, rest, exercise for health, and earning a livelihood, all calculated, the time left it is not enough for mastering even one branch of knowledge. Again all men are not equally circumstanced. Majority of them are not born to conditions favourable for receiving any education at all. Some are excluded for want of funds; others have got to toil hard for their bread all the time and so on. Again those who are in a position to spend time and money after education have not got the same degree of inclination for it. Some avoid it as difficult, others take fancy on some particular subject only. Others again have no capacity or liking for any subject at all or do not try to grasp it or fails to do so. That is why we find a giant in literature to be a veritable pigmy in mathematics and so on. So it is clear that an all-round education is not possible for man. Even if it is admitted that exceptionally fortunate few can do so what do we gain thereby? How do one or two

such men benefit the rest of humanity and what do they themselves get therefrom, as the proficiency generally comes in old age? Education alone is not the consummation devotedly to be wished for, so that it is right welcome whenever it may happen to come. Action being the primary necessity and education being the only means of determining its course, how then one is benefitted by acquiring knowledge when one is ready for the grave? All the actions in life have been misguided for want of knowledge, and it comes just before when power to do work is at an end, well, what good is derived from it? Thus it is clear that nobody can wait to act till after the sense of duty has been acquired from sound education. Up to a certain age one has got to subject himself absolutely and unconditionally to education and control in exclusion of any attempt at experiment. But it has this value that even if the educated man is not benefitted himself, it does help others to a great extent because he can leave behind him a record of what he has learned so that others might follow in the same track.

The learned men store up their knowledge in diverse ways—some in the shape of moral and ethical codes, some in religious books, some in sociology, some in law, so that others get his experiences acquired after long course of patient and close striving, cut and dried ready for assimilation and use. Literature has a wonderful power in moulding the motives of individuals and nations. It brings our imaginations into play and presents us with pictures of good and grand objects. Thus ideals

are presented to us which act on our imagination, and our dispositions are changed for good. To praise Lakshmana is to turn into a devoted brother, to admire Bhishma is to exert oneself to be thoroughly righteous and brave, to extol Sita is to form a picture of perfect and everlasting fidelity, to praise Othello is to try to become ourselves strongminded. Education and control have the same effects so far as the knowledge of any subject goes. But the true spirit is more readily caught through education than through control. For instance, scriptures hold out the prospect of terrible hell fires for the sin of theft. Education shows that theft produces social evil and disorder, and does much harm to the society and to the individual. So both the scriptures and education agree in saying that theft is a sin, and though they differ very widely as to the results arising therefrom, their influence on our conduct remains the same. Erroneous knowledge sometime produces prejudices which tend to do not a little harm. Both regard drinking as sin, but the educated won't mind an honest peg if required for medicinal purposes, while the religious bigot won't touch it even if it would cost him his life. Control has its advantages as well as its drawbacks. To the religious man, duty is a sacred and solemn thing worth striving after at all costs, while on the educated it has no such hold. Faith performs duty with more zeal than does knowledge. So if the instruments of control are not liable to error, they are likely to do more good than education probably could. Control are of different kinds: Religious control, social control, state control, family control

are the chief ones, and will be taken up in their order.

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### RELIGIOUS CONTROL.

At the first stages of human existence on the earth, there was no society, no king, nothing except the natural objects required for the purposes of meeting the wants of the natural faculties. Man like the lower animals used to roam about naked, eating fruits and roots as he could obtain without efforts. He then knew nothing as to how clouds come to exist, whence do the waters of the rivers come from, how the trees grow and how they die, so that he deemed the natural forces to be their causes and regarded the forces as Gods, and that plenty and pleasure could be obtained by propitiating them. Laboring under this belief they tried to propitiate the Gods by worship and ceased doing such things as were considered unpleasant to them. This devotion gradually grew so strong as to induce them to do things which are cruel, mean and disgraceful under the impression that the Gods would be pleased in this way, without feeling the least compunction or remorse. It is surprising to find how this devotion and desire to get blessings from the Gods could lead them to the unstinting spirit of sacrifice which goes the length of sacrificing one's kingdom, wealth, wife, children and even one's own life. They would contentedly do anything which seemed to them to be pleasing to the Gods, whether such an act is beneficial or injurious, disgraceful or dignified, mean or

noble, cruel or sympathetic, calculated to do harm to the country or to improve its condition. They understood nothing as to why and how the universe with its manifold contents came into existence. The deeper problems of human existence *e.g.* birth, death and after, were mystery to them. They found it beyond their powers to explain the various factors of human happiness or sufferings and naturally they depended upon the Gods for enlightenment, and were led to believe that God, the Highest of the High, is the fountain head of all pleasure and pain, happiness came if He were pleased, while sorrow resulted from His displeasure. Thus men desisted from doing things which they considered to be against His will.

Gradually those who were blessed with keen intelligence found out that the best way to induce a man to any action or to dissuade him from it was to place it before him as sanctioned or otherwise by God. Thus they gave out any course of conduct they found to be beneficial to humanity as sanctioned by the Gods. These injunctions later on were converted into scriptures and the belief came to prevail that they have been given out by the Gods, and the following of the scriptures thus came to be recognised as the principal duty of man, and the belief gradually grew that anybody acting against the scriptural teachings is unworthy of being called a man, and the mere touch of such a person is polluting and brings about the displeasure of the Gods.

In ancient times there was no other control than that of Religion. People then had so profound a

regard for the scriptures that nobody ventured to act according to his belief if it militated against the course of conduct laid down therein. Scriptures alone met all the wants of men in the sphere of knowledge. In fact there is no other systems of control so efficient as that of Religion, because anything done with the religious spirit is done with the heart and there is no insincerity about it. It purges the heart of its dross and man becomes pure by following it. Oh ! for the days of the golden age when men lived blessed in their happiness, when the religious spirit of man maintained its pristinest simplicity and entirety. Everybody then was an enquirer after religion, and religion was the sole aim of life. The family disputes even were then settled by religion. If man had the same religious tendency as of old at the present day, this world of ours would have been a paradise. No other form of control would have been necessary.

Strange is the course of events ! Even such a state of blessedness could not continue long and gradually man came to doubt the truth of the religious teachings. At first all men recognised only one kind of Gods and their behests, gradually differences came to be felt in them. In the Old Vedic days, Indra, Bayu, Baruna and others were recognised as Gods. In the days of the Upanishads "One formless Brahman" came to be regarded as the most supreme. The philosophers tried their utmost to establish a God according to their own reasons, while the different Puranas set up Krishna, Kali, Siva and other deities as the supreme God-head. On the

other hand Budhistic faith and Atheism raised their heads up. In different lands, different religions such as Christianity and Mohomedanism began to be preached. But in spite of there being different religions, man the only creation than can profit by them remained the same. He found himself in a difficulty. He had got to decide as to which of these numerous forms of religion should be regarded as the one revealed by God. The old belief on religion gave way. The enquirer after truth was initiated into a new religion. After a time he awakened to the fact that the one he had accepted was not the truth he was seeking after, and thus got into another. In this way the profound regard for religion gradually gave way. So the religious control of old gradually ceased to exert the same influence as before and it began to grow less and less day by day.

At present more harm than good is done by the religious control, because into many a religious faith of the present day, not only error but self interest have found their way. Many countries have been found to suffer to a very considerable extent through persons having an immovable belief on such interested teachings. The burning of the Alexandrian Library and the destruction of the Somnath Temple are cases in point. On the other hand those who have not the firm faith in scriptures and entertain doubts as to such scriptural teachings as appear to be unreasonable on the very face of it, or those, led by a spirit of enquiry devote themselves to the search after truth only to find the different religions to be so discrepant and divergent, generally end

in atheism. So that religion at the present day is not of much use to the believers or to the scepticals either.

### SOCIAL CONTROL.

Although religious control is the best for bringing about a change in the nature of man, social control is also necessary, because there are many who cannot forego the pleasures of the moment in expectation of happiness or out of fear of sufferings on the other side of the grave. They do not understand their real interests and aspire to what belongs to others. In order to check them from doing mischief, control by the society is essentially necessary.

\* Man is a social animal, fond of society and cannot do without it. Man wants his mate, his relations, his neighbours always, and unless there is an exchange of the necessaries of life, all the articles cannot be procured. That is how a man outcasted by the society fails to defend himself. Any body misconducting himself is shut out of social intercourse, so the misdemeanant comes round to the society with his bended knees, takes the punishment the society is pleased to inflict and purchases forgiveness at the cost of binding himself not to repeat the same offence in future. This control is the social control.

It will be clear on a little consideration that it is only another form of the religious control, society being almost a deity whom we worship because it is only the another name of the sum total of the individuals. The sum total of the universe is God, so any



totalisation (समष्टि) is a deity. Therefore it is essentially necessary that we should worship the totalisation which goes by the name of society. Wider the totalisation, nearer is it to God, and narrower the totalisation further is it from Him. That is why those who live in society are more advanced than those who do not, as may be well seen by comparing the grades of vegetables, animals and man. So unity is the secret of success in our actions. It is this unity which underlies the success of the Western people of the present day in all the spheres of activity. This was also the secret of the glorious past of the Indo-Aryans. The ancient Kshatriyas never bowed before anybody because of this unity, and it is for want of this cementing force that they have been reduced to what they are now. In this mighty universe who could stand alone? Not even a mere particle of sand on the shores of the infinite ocean. Who could stand the stress and strain of the continually raging conflict in the universe alone and unaided? That is why all actions, right or wrong, are considered from the stand-point of society. So is the case with right and wrong enumerated in the scriptures.

Our evolution, retardation, freedom, manliness &c. all have references to the society. No gain accrues, no harm is done where the progress or retardation of a single individual only is concerned. Even a little progress of the society at the cost of lives and wealths of thousands of individuals is preferable to mighty progress of millions of individuals purchased with even very little injury to the society. Real progress has got to be calculated

from the stand-point of view of the society and not of the individual. If millions of people of a conquered country were to migrate to a land of independence, the conquered country would be in no way benefitted and it will continue to be in the same state. But the country would get freed if millions of that country could risk their lives and die for the country. So to adopt the manners and customs of another country on the ground that those of one's own country are backward, would not in any way affect the backward society towards its betterment, but real and solid good would be done if the weak points are touched and removed.

One who renounces his own society for personal advancement not only does mischief to the society but to himself as well. He does real benefit to himself who can do so without leaving his society. But at the present moment nobody does that, he renounces the parent society for his own separated and personal benefit, and the state of the society, like religion, is rather lamentable.

For this miserable state of affairs the perverted rules of society and the broad-cast preaching of the doctrine of personal freedom have to answer. Everybody nowadays aspires to a personal freedom and deems subjection to society as a bond and a misfortune to such an extent that God, religion and society are transformed to suit the individual taste. He never thinks that the society is not under his control, but in fact it is quite the other way, he is related to the society in the same way and to the same extent as the limbs of the body are to the whole. Who can develop any particular limb at the cost

of the whole body? And just as the body and the limbs are injured by the limbs not working for the benefit of the whole, so the society and the individual are injured unless the individual chooses to work for the common good of the society. So our chief duty is to preserve the society, and social control is the principal control.

Society controls us by directly punishing our misdeeds as well as indirectly. There are many acts of ours which do not expose ourselves to the direct punishment of the society or of the state either, but which must be punished in order to avoid the mighty injuries that they would otherwise give rise to. The society indirectly and secretly punishes such acts or omissions so that harm is averted and benefit results. It may be that one can do wrong without directly injuring any individual and as such the society or the state do not take him to task for it directly, but once confirmed in the habit he may in time cause serious harm to the society. On the other hand there are many acts of philanthropy and piety which if not done expose an individual to no obloquy or punishment either social or of the state, but such acts if not done leave many works of usefulness unfinished. Now in order to check such indirect wrongs and to encourage the acts of piety as aforesaid, society exerts subtle and indirect influences and control which go by the names of blame and praise.

Whenever anybody does anything wrong, the society speaks ill of him and in the case of any good undertaking the individual is praised. Praise or blame influences the mind of man and he tries to avoid the

action blamed and persist in the one praised. This inducement leads many to cease from evil and engage in glorious deeds. Many again are led in their glorious and noble actions by the expectation of leaving a name and fame behind them which will not perish with the body. There would have been no such action unless they were led by a desire for such posthumous fame. Man craves for fame and for perpetuating his name for ever, so to say, without even understanding whether it is of any use to have a reputation and a fair name after death. It is no wonder that we should do so in so far as we ourselves praise the mighty deads, Shakespeare, Milton, Kalidasa and others when we converse with them daily through their works.

We find that this indirect influence is more potent than direct punishment and reward. This craving for posthumous fame and fear of blame is highly beneficial to us. Another feature of this influence is that it is not confined to one society only but applies to the individuals of all the different societies, who then try to gain the good wishes of others, and man under this control never totally loses his freedom. But unfortunately even this is not of much use at the present day for it is hard to decide between actions, praiseworthy or otherwise, owing to the lack of order in the society. The same kind of action brings praise at one place and blame at another. For instance the early marriage of girls and marriage at an advanced age, the purdah system of the females and female liberty, imitation of the Western methods of living

and dress and the persistence in Indian customs and manners and Indian mode of life, either of this has its adherents and opponents. Thus it is becoming difficult to find out which action would draw praise and which blame, and as a result one has now lost the fear for blame and hopes of praise, and does not care for the results of his actions and does what appears to him to be good.

### STATE CONTROL.

State control is only another form of social control. King is only another name of the leader of the society. In the ancient times no body ever vested the king with his powers, he installed himself by virtue of his powers and strength. His subjects gradually grew attached to him when they found his actions and control beneficial to them and so helped him to extend his dominions. State control is absolutely necessary to check those who are regardless of the religious and social control. The king brings these offenders round by punishments and is therefore the defender of religion and society as well. Rebellion against the king is regarded as rebellion against the religion and the society. Sometimes the king commits mischief to the people through ignorance or self-interest. When this wrong exceeds the limit of being borne, the people rebel against him and put up some other worthy man in his place. The former king tries to keep his place as much as he can do, the dogs of war are let loose at such times and there is terrible lawlessness for want of state-control and the country is devastated by famines and epidemics.

That is why there should be a better understanding between the rulers and the ruled. The ruler ought to consider himself as the servant of the people, his only duty is to administer the State in such a way as would give peace and prosperity and happiness to the people, and he would remember that his ignorance will harm the people terribly, and that he holds the post under a lease and unless he attends to his duty properly he would commit a sin. Manu says that the king was made by God to protect the world and was made of particles taken from Indra, Vayu, Yama, Surja, Agni, Varuna, Soma and Kuvera. As Indra he is to shower benefits on his kingdom ; as Vayu to know all that happens ; as Yama to control his subjects ; as Surja to take taxes ; as Agni to be resplendent and full of energy ; as Varuna to punish the wicked ; as Soma to give joy to his subjects ; as Kubera to support his people. Thus a good and true king should always be intent on the welfare of his subjects, subordinating his own personal comforts and interests to those of the people.

Reverence to the king, the head of the State comes naturally after reverence to God, the representative of whose power, justice and protection he is on earth. No subject therefore can free himself from the duty of helping the State as much as he can or can allow himself to form any wrong opinion against the king. The people should think that the king always looks after their welfare, ready to lay down his life for their sake, and that owing to the multifarious public duties he has got

to discharge, it is likely that he should make mistakes, and that everybody is open to the same probabilities and that any action deemed by the people to be wrong may not be really so. So they must think well before they take steps against the King. So Manu says.

वालीऽपि नावमन्तव्यो मनुष्य इति भूमिपः ।

महती देवता ह्येषा नररूपेण तिष्ठति ।

दण्डी हि समहसेजो दुर्दैर्घ्याकृतात्मभिः ।

धर्माद्विचलितं हन्ति दृपमेव सवान्धवम् ।

“The king even if a child should not be looked down upon as an ordinary man, He is the highest Devata in the form of man. His sceptre is the emblem of mighty power, an ordinary man is not fit to hold it. If the king swerves from the path of duty the same sceptre destroys him together with his relations.

But the control exerted by the State being very strong and poignant and there being an inherent probability of its misuse, modern people have grown averse to it. That is why in some countries the system of Republics has taken place of the monarchical form of government, and owing to mistakes due to inexperience and selfishness, poverty and distress, strife of labor and capital, and in fact a disorganisation in everything have increased, The remedy lies in “restoring right feeling between the king and the ministers, in restoring right feeling between all the limbs and organs of the State, and in each and all performing their respective duties of protecting and ruling, advising and administering, and helping with loyalty, fidelity and

obedience." In the case of a conquered country it is not expected that a foreign government would do good to it. But in the case of India, the people have derived much benefit from the benign influence of the British rule.

### FAMILY CONTROL.

Father and mother, brother and sister, husband and wife, son and daughter and others in the family are closely inter-related. The suffering or happiness of one of them affects the rest and so they have a right to keep an eye on each other's sufferings and enjoyments. Besides there being a natural force of attraction amongst them they are drawn together in a mutually loving group. The control of a member of the family is productive of better results than other forms of control, because both the ruler and the ruled know that there is nothing but a desire of welfare that actuates the control. Look at the control of the father and mother actuated by the motive of doing good to the child. All sorts of punishments corporal and otherwise are inflicted, but no child ever rebels against them, but submits himself calmly to this control.

This control exerts the most salutary influence, because the children gather all the materials of manhood and spirituality while under this control. How we could have learnt if our parents did not care for our education? How may we wish to learn of ourselves? It is the earnest endeavours of our parents, to teach us



and it is their control and advice that make it possible for us to get a timely education.

Like the parental control, conjugal control is also very useful and healthy. There is a strange potency in this control, a sharp sweetness about it that makes it imperative, although there is no corporal punishment, no confinement, no fine in it. Sometimes it has been seen that a man has been cured of his loose morals through the sweet control of his wife. Defects and faults in one's character, which religious, social and state control and education had vainly tried to eradicate have been cured by the sweet and healthy control of the wife. Many a man who lived worthless and aimless has become active, regular and thrifty through influence of married life. So family control is essentially necessary so much so that without it there would have been no end of misfortunes in the society. We could not have tasted of knowledge, education, progress and love, and man could not have come to occupy a position superior to other animals. But this family control has like the others lost must of its efficacy, because every body is after personal freedom and is unwilling to follow the wishes of the father and the other superiors in the family.

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## CHAPTER X.

### CIVILISATION.

Civilisation is also a form of social control because many people conform to the right standard of conduct, lest they should be called uncivilised. In fact civilisation and progress are at the root of the glory of man and is the distinctive feature of humanity. What is civilisation? There is no book which would enable us to know its essential characteristics. Like religion there are differences of opinion with regard to the essentials of civilisation. What is civilisation according to one is barbarism according to another. The Indo-Aryans hold one view of civilisation while the Europeans hold an opposite view. The ideal of the western civilisation is luxurious living, the fullest enjoyment of sensual pleasures, the most complex and artificial standard of social living, while the ideal of a Hindu is that of simple living.

What are the features of civilisation? A careful consideration would make it evident that the state of Nature is barbarism, so that civilisation is a departure from that state and is something artificial. We find that men who live in a perfect natural state are the savages, living in open space, eating fruits and roots, roaming about in the forests totally naked and satisfying their carnal desires whenever they arise. Those who

have out-grown this primitive state, live in houses, eat the products of cultivation, dress themselves in clothes and have adopted married lives are called civilised.

In fact the measure of the status of the society in the scale of civilisation is the measure of its departure from this primitive state of Nature. The extent to which a nation has conquered Nature and adopts methods of subjugating her in every day life determines the greater or less amount of civilisation that such nations and men possess. The nation is more civilized who has conquered Nature the more. Thus those that live upon the vegetable products of cultivation are more civilised than those that live upon wild fruits and animals, while the elaborate culinary arrangements of modern society mark the dietics of highest civilisation. Thus from the primitive sexual propensity of man seeking satisfaction the moment it arises, without choice and without control, society has progressed through intermediate stages of marriage unions more and more permanent in duration, till we come to the highest concept of civilisation—a strictly monogamous nuptial tie. Thus from the bestial selfishness of the savage who would not hesitate even to eat up his wife to satisfy his hunger, man rises through different degrees of altruism to the of highest civilisation according to which the destiny of man is to serve all and to minister to the happiness of all. In fine we can say that civilisation consists in out-growing the primitive state of man by conquering his instinctive animal propensities to subserve his highest purpose and destiny.

Such a view seems to be reasonable also on *a priori* grounds, because anything natural is spontaneous and comes without any effort, whereas much has to be done for producing something artificial. Using the barks of trees for clothing costs one no labour at all, so it is barbarous, while the clothing made of cotton, wool or silk fabrics, richly dyed and embroidered costs one the use of artistic faculty and skill such as the highest civilisation alone can slowly develop. In fact, Art progresses with civilisation and removes man more and more from his primitive state. Thus naturalness is barbarism and artificiality is civilisation.

Let us not by any means suggest that everything unnatural conduces to civilisation, for in that case the systematic violation of Nature's laws would have destroyed the existence of man rather than furthering his civilisation. The natural conditions are essential to our very existence and have been, as a matter of act, devised by God to serve our purposes. To subvert those conditions would mean therefore the non-satisfaction of our essential wants and the non-fulfilment of the most useful purposes of our life. Besides who can have the power to act against Nature's laws?

What is then civilisation? To us it seems that antagonism to Nature is not civilisation, but it consists in developing and manifesting the latent possibilities of Nature's forces. Houses, clothes, food etc. although artificial belong to Nature, because all their ingredients are obtained from it and their preparation is impossible without the aid of the natural forces. In short, no product

of human Art could be said to be unnatural, just as the products of the activities of lower animals *e.g.* lac, nests of birds, honey etc. are not unnatural. Man is created by God as the lower animals are. In this chapter we are not going to deal with this question at all. Suffice it for our present purposes to say that the products of human Art are artificial, but that Art consists merely in the clever manipulation of natural forces, to ignore which or to act against which would mean sure annihilation of the operator.

• Food and sleep, the natural wants of man are essential for living. To go against them is to go against the forces of Nature which it is beyond man's powers even to attempt. In fact Art takes its models from Nature as the natural mountain caves for the houses and the natural bark of the trees for clothes ; the abiding human emotions are also natural, love and forgiveness, love and indifference, self-seeking and sympathy, pleasure and pain, and the power to intensify or weaken them are all natural. The province of civilisation is only to harmonise them that they make up for man's ultimate welfare. Its sole purpose is to increase the resources of Nature by the clever manipulation of natural forces by human intelligence which is also a peculiarly potent natural force.

No praise attaches to that which comes to exist by itself, the praise attached to such a thing properly belongs to Nature or to God. The magnet attracts iron, because that power is implanted in it by God, it does nothing by its own endeavours. It can at best take pride

in the thought, that it has become a magnet instead of being the earth, and that it has an aristocratic birth. So the wife who loves the husband as being young and handsome is not much praise worthy. She has only been following the trend of her dominant passion. She loves because of the attractive force of beauty. The love of the wife who loves an ugly and unworthy husband, because it is her duty to do so is really praise worthy, because that love has been the outcome of a hard struggle between her emotion and righteousness. She had to strive hard to keep her in the path of duty. If by so striving the mental faculties have been harmonised and no harm done to the society, it is to be termed civilisation and it certainly does reflect credit on her, and whenever we happen to extol civilisation such a wife must always come in for her share of praise. While on the otherhand we praise love at first sight as a thing of beauty and joy, just as we describe with glee the peacock dancing, the beautiful moon shining in the azure firmament, the river running down in soft murmurs, the bee sucking the honey of the flowers or the lotus opening her breast to the rays of the sun. From the stand point of beauty certainly a higher place will be assigned to it but from the stand point of higher ideals of man it has not much merit. That is why in India, Sabitri and the wife of the leprous Brahmin are given a higher place as ideal wives, than Indumati, the wife of Aja, or Sakuntala, because Sabitri did not regret her choice when she came to know that she was fated to be a widow one year after her marriage and

the wife of the leprous Brahmin had to keep her affections unswerving amidst the greatest drawbacks. The loves of Indumati and Sakuntala are sweet and deep certainly, but are not so praiseworthy, because they are the outcomes of natural attraction due to the intrinsic beauty and attractiveness of the objects of their love.

The benefits derived out of things natural extend to the civilised and the uncivilised alike, but those derived from artificial things are limited strictly to the civilised. Similarly the natural contrivances for averting injury resulting from natural objects can be utilised by both : but the artificial means can be used with any result by the civilised alone. The modes of securing enjoyment and averting pain are by far greater in the civilised society than in the uncivilised, The civilised man thus appears like an angel when compared with the uncivilised.

Just as fire cooks as well as burns and distroys, so civilisation produces both beneficial and harmful results. The savage has a strong physique, a mind free from cares, little wants and consequently less liable to pain for not being able to satisfy them : he is satisfied with food for the body and the senses. But the civilised man is weak in body, his mind full of cares and anxieties ; his wants are manifold and so are the pains necessary to meet them. The uncivilised labours under the disadvantage of a weak mind, and the civilised that of a weak body. Constant exercise of the body in one case makes it strong, and a constant exercise of

the mind in another weakens it. The uncivilised manages every thing with physical strength, while the civilised manages with the aid of instruments. The civilised can take the lives of thousands in a very short time with the aid of fire-arms not adapted to a hand to hand fight. He covers hundreds of miles in a day with the help of steam engines, but he is not able to walk a long distance like the savage. Equipped with sufficient clothing to protect himself from heat and cold, he is unable to endure them as the uncivilised can. Thus the civilised lacks in physical strength which is counter-balanced by a superabundance of mental strength and vigour with the aid of which he produces many wonderful things,—editing books on science and philosophy, producing fine works, framing good rules for the maintenance and continuity of the society. But he is susceptible to manifold diseases owing to physical weakness and mental agonies consequent on the stress of changing circumstances. Simplicity or naturalness belongs to the uncivilised, while crookedness or artificiality is the property of the civilised. Certainly it is the aim of all society to regard the neighbour as one's ownself, but now a days he acts very crookedly towards a neighbour who is also antagonistic. From the crookedness untruth, deception and need of flattery arise which lead on to various discords and strifes in the society. Greater the power a man has more is the honor. In the uncivilised society honor goes with power so much so that the kingship amongst them rests solely on one's strength and prowess. Greater the intelligence higher the honor,



greater the work done higher the reputation—the worthless always occupy the back seats. In the civilised society an equality antagonistic to nature is preached but is never practised, so that we find more discord than in the uncivilised society, and as consequence mental suffering falls to the lot of its members. They are blind though blessed with a pair of eyes and they suffer because they find that although in theory the principle of equality of rights and actions is preached, in practice a principle diametrically opposed to it is followed. Equality in the civilised society is more superficial and limited to external forms only without ever touching the deeper chords of life.

From these facts it may be inferred that one is not so happy in the civilised society as in the uncivilised, in spite of its external polish and glitter and its numerous objects of pleasure. It is a fact that we find diseases, epidemics, strife and suffering in the civilised society to a more appalling extent than in the uncivilised. Certainly objects of pleasure in the uncivilised society are not plenty, but there are also not so many wants as in the civilised. Thus although the uncivilised are denied the pleasure of enjoying the luxuries to the same extent as we find in the civilised, they have at least this consolation that they are spared the suffering and the anguish for not being able to satisfy the manifold wants which one suffers in a civilised society. If there is no positive enjoyment there is at least the satisfaction of want of suffering.

Sufferings are of two kinds—one due to sorrow or pain and the other due to absence or want of happiness.

One is positive and the other is negative. Pain or sorrow is the out-come of the want of necessities, while unhappiness is the out-come of want of things which bring in happiness. Food, drink and air are necessary for our lives ; their want produces the pains of hunger, thirst and heat. We feel glad at the sweet fragrance of rose and feel unhappy when we miss it. In the same way sweet things produces pleasurable sensation to the tongue, music to the ear, beautiful things to the eyes, and soft things to the touch. If we are precluded from enjoying them for want of power to do so, there is pain which is negative in its nature. But the want of any such object unless attended with an experience of enjoyment in a previous occasion, produces no such unhappiness. On the other hand if we have had even a casual taste of anything pleasurable, its want or absence produces uneasiness. So the uncivilised or savage feels no unhappiness for want of palatial buildings to live in or soft downy beds to lie down, palatable things to eat, melodious music and various other objects of luxury and pleasure to enjoy, simply because he has had no taste of these things. Even the lower grades in the civilised societies, the dwellers of cottages and huts, do not feel so unhappy for exactly the same reasons.

Along with the march of civilisation various artificial objects of luxury come into existence. Greater the number of such things, more intense is the desire on the part of the people to get them : the less the satisfaction of such desires, the greater is the pain that they suffer. In the civilised society we get so much accustomed to

palatable food that its want makes us feel unhappy as when we labour under artificial wants. Western civilisation is at the root of such a deplorable state of things. It preaches the doctrine of equality of man and claims an uniformity of rights for everyone to enjoy these objects of pleasure. So that everyone is eager after every kind of pleasure, which as a rule falls to the lot of a very few--sheer disappointment being the share of the majority.

. Again those who are dislodged from their positions in life after having been accustomed for a time to the pleasures and luxuries attending them suffer terribly. Without position, without money, they are unable to command the luxuries as they had been accustomed. They have then got to change their rich abodes for huts, palatable dishes for coarse food, gorgeous dresses for plain clothes. The savage having not many such objects of luxury, there is no longing in him for these objects and there is no consequent suffering for not being able to get them. He needs only such objects as would meet the natural daily wants, and the attempts to get them are crowned with success. The rest of his time is spent in rest and of the enjoyment in pastimes with one another. The objects of luxuries in the case of the civilised people are manifold and the gates to acquire them are open, and their hard mental and physical labours after these luxuries, from their boyhood to old age, wreck them both mentally and physically, and the consummation wished for ever recedes and brings on gloom and sadness in its train. It is never their lot to taste real

happiness—disease, sorrow, disappointment and other sufferings come to them right down to their graves.

These defects of the civilised society lead some people to think that real happiness may consist in continuing to be in the savage or uncivilised state. Thus Goldsmith and other European worthies have sung the praises of the rural life, and the Indo-Aryan sages as Shillhan Misra, have spoken in high terms about the animal life as compared to the human. He says "Oh deer, you never attend on the rich in expectation, you never flatter, never hear the egoistic speech of anybody; you browse whenever you feel hungry and sleep when you need it. Say, by what austerities, you have attained to this happy state?"

But in fact it is too much to think that man would ever remain in the savage state. Civilisation evolves those qualities in man which make him worthy of the name, while the savage state is merely the animal stage of man. The only point of difference between man and the animal is that the latter follows Nature only while man does not. The animals eat, sleep and act according to the promptings of the instincts implanted in them by Nature, and there is no difference whatsoever between the animals of to-day and those of thousand years ago in these respects. But compare man of the present day with one of a thousand years ago and see what difference lies between them. The Britons of the present day and those of the early days of history bear the same relation as do the angels to the brutes. The cause of this is not very far to seek. It is civilisation

Without it, they would have continued to be in the same state of Nature as the brutes. Without civilisation man could never have been the highest of creation on this earth. Man has been created by God as the highest and the most progressive, so civilisation is natural and inevitable in his case. Just as youth follows childhood as a matter of course, so does civilisation follow the savage state. To society savage state is the childhood and civilisation the youth, and like the irresponsible play and enjoyment of childhood in the case of an individual, natural happiness is limited only to the savage state of man. As in the case of an individual, youth is the period of activity, the period of aspirations and cares, so the civilised state is the period of progress of the society wherein happiness and pain are interblended. If it is reasonable for us to shirk from youth because of its duties, its sufferings, cares and anxieties and to desire to remain a child for ever, then only could we rightly wish for the continuance of the uncivilised state in preference to the duties and responsibilities attendant on civilisation. But where is the differentiating element in man if he ever remains a child and has got to be led by others for all times to come? It does not stand to reason therefore that we should desire to go back to our primitive state, the state of Nature. Civilisation never follows human will or endeavours. It comes of itself through the laws of Nature, or else it would never have come at all.

There is no reason why man should of his own initiative have striven after the advent of civilisation.

Man continues to take birth and to die now as it used to be the case in the days of barbarism; on the otherhand he now-a-days dies at a comparatively early age. The same fate meets man now after his death as in the olden times, but there is a sad want at the present day of the happiness man then enjoyed: so that it does not stand to reason that man should of his own motion strive after a condition in which he has to toil hard in order to get his living in preference to one in which he has got scarcely to stir himself in order to live. When the result is rather worse than good, what is the necessity of increasing difficulties? Has man been drawn to this troublesome civilisation simply by the attraction of the external gloss and glitter? But this is not a fact. Want by Nature is the sole cause of it.

Desire for food is natural when one is hungry—without food there is pain and ultimately death. In the aboriginal state, men used to satisfy their hunger with fruits and roots abundant in Nature, to allay their thirst with water from the lakes, rivers and springs and to protect themselves from sun and rain by sheltering within mountain caves and under the cool shades of trees. But as they multiplied, the quantity of food afforded by Nature was found to be insufficient to meet the requirements of all. Then they had to take to cultivation. The natural sources of water being insufficient, artificial tanks had to be dug and wells sunk, and the mountain caves not being accomodating to all, houses had to be built. Necessity led to desire and to attempts to remove the wants, and the

intelligence of man ensured him success. In this way, necessity led man to take the first steps in civilisation and the taste of artificial objects of happiness encouraged him in his onward march. Gradually cultivation, commerce, art and slavery came into existence. Books on science, philosophy, astronomy and so forth were written. The society reached the full development of its youth and men became worthy of the name.

As old age and finally death follows youth, society also has a period of peace after civilisation and then ultimately its dissolution. No society ever remains in the same condition for ever. It remains stationary for a time after the civilisation has reached its culminating point and during that period no further progress is visible. Gradually dissolution begins and ultimately no trace of the society remains. It is then the newer and younger societies follow in the wake of the old civilisations. The ancient civilisations of Egypt, Assyria &c. have ceased to exist and comparatively recent European civilisations have progressed on them.

The fact that civilisation is inevitable and that it increases the troubles may lead some people to think that it is scarcely desirable at all. The troubles of the civilised people arise mainly out of the misapprehension of the nature of the civilisation. Unable to grasp the healthy aspects of civilisation, they have incorporated many things in it that are unhealthy and prejudicial, and these account for the troubles. If civilisation is chosen after due care and scrutiny, the society would have never to suffer, but on the other hand it would have been longlived

and happy. The Egyptian and Assyrian civilisations have been untimely blotted out of existence because there was a preponderance of evil of the ephemeral in them ; whereas it is the preponderance of good of the eternal in the Indian civilisation that still keeps it alive and operative inspite of the continual incursions or warfare with the rival and younger civilisations for several centuries back. We are sure that we would not be guilty of hoping against hope when we hold that the future of India is not at all dark, on the other hand the present India teems with mighty promises of the future.

It is the elements of superiority that encourages us to hope for growth and progress in this body. It is true that the Western civilisation is exerting a terribly disruptive activity and influence over it, but still it may be devoutly hoped that it will continue to live and ultimately conquer its opponents. It is quite out of the scope of this little volume to enter into a lengthy discursion as to the superior merits of the Indian civilisation, but we should like to illustrate the point we have raised with a short discussion on the two Indian institutions, viz, the position of the sexes and the caste system.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### THE POSITION OF THE SEXES.

#### **Female Liberty.**

Now a days there has been a good deal of controversy over the position of females. European civilisation is for female emancipation. The chief arguments in favour of it may be summed up in the following words viz. that God has created male and female equal, none has been made subject to the other. So God wills that every one should act according to one's choice, and it is right that one should. But we have seen that no two things in the universe are alike in all particulars. How can then man and woman be alike in the face of the palpable differences that exist in their constitution and nature? Males have greater physical strength; their body and mind are firm with hearts strong and courage abundant, while the females are weak and fragile, shy and timid.

Some would say that these differences in character are not due to any natural discrepancies, but are the results of habit. If the girls were allowed to do the same kind of work as the boys from their childhood, they would have acquired the same qualities and powers of the body of the mind. It may be asked that if woman had the power to be the man's equal, why have they not been so? The question naturally arises, how could man get

his dominance over woman if they both started with initial equality of powers? What is the cause of our not being able to find any place on the earth where the woman is man's superior or at any rate his equal? If she had equal powers it stands to reason that at least in some place and at some time she would have controlled man and swayed over him. But when that is not the case and when we find woman in all ages and climes to be under man's control and influence, the inference is strong that woman is naturally weaker and that in consideration of her inability she has not been made to work as hard as man, rather than her inferiority in strength being due to her forced banishment from the field of work. Besides who can have the power to act against the dispensation of Providence and the behests of Nature?

The condition of the lower animals also goes to prove this inference. A cow is weaker than a bull, a mare is weaker than a horse. A male elephant has two tusks, a primary weapon of offence and defence which the female has not, one male monkey leads hosts of females. It cannot be said in the case of lower animals that there is any artificial pressure of society or any unnatural oppression. Nor is it likely that the same kind of unnatural oppression or mistake should be committed in all climes. So we can safely conclude that the females are naturally weaker than the males.

It becomes clearer if we consider their respective physical and moral characters. The bearing and rearing of children which are allotted to them by Nature are

necessarily very weakening and their natural shyness also makes them unfit for the struggles of life. The child-bearing functions develop in the females at a comparatively young age, and throughout the long periods of gestation and weaning they are unfit for hard work, and must necessarily depend upon the stronger sex for their support. The time and attention they have to devote to the rearing of offsprings leave them little to spare for the acquisition of knowledge. On the other hand the males have no such disabilities, and they are perfectly free by the economy of Nature to devote their time and energy to acquisition of strength and independence. In fact unless civilisation had intervened they would not have to share the burden of maintaining their children even. They would have only to share in the pleasure of propagating without being required to take upon themselves the responsibilities and worries of maintaining the children. The inferior animals may be cited by the way of illustration. On these considerations it appears that males are free by Nature and the females are naturally dependent and are inferior to the males in both physical and mental strength. The inferior must be controlled by the superior and it will be against the nature of things to hold that the weak and the strong are equals.

Others agreeing with the above may say that certain faculties are weaker in the females than in the males, but there are others in which they excel, so that on the average they are equal. But they seem to overlook that the faculties which are more marked in the females

are all indicative of weakness and conducive to their position of dependence, e.g. mercy, affection, love, shyness, fortitude. The actions outcoming of mercy, affection and love are calculated to be sacrificial to one's own interests, and one under the sway of these faculties has got to relegate the self to the back-ground and look to the happiness of others, and thus to look to another for weal and woe. The lover is subservient to the object of his love, a shy person is unable and unwilling to get at the thing desired. A weeping warrior never wins. One with fortitude endures the troubles and oppressions inflicted by others. All these are painful to one's own self and mean dependence on others. The presence of these forces in the female make her utterly oblivious of her own self and she is thus dependent on others. To a class who can sacrifice their lives for the welfare of the husbands and the children, who desist from doing any act lest it would bring in shame and obloquy, who endure all troubles most contentedly, a life of dependence is happiness.

Unless it were natural to them they would never have come under the control of the males. There is another point yet—unless the females are subject to the males, family affairs would come to a stand still. If the wife wanted to have her own way, she would have to do the same work as man, and in that case nothing but evil would have been the result. The anatomists and the physiologists have found that hard labour during pregnancy is highly injurious to a female. Now if you start with the equality and independence of both, i.e. if the wife could

be allowed to act according to her own sweet will even in opposition to that of her husband, she must labour equally with him, she must carry weights or till the soil just as her husband may happen to do. But during this period she naturally desists from work and looks upon her husband for help, and thus comes under his control. Because woman has accepted this subjection, man has taken upon himself the more difficult portion of life's work and has assigned to the milder sex those that are less troublesome and easy and are thus beneficent. This arrangement works for the good of both. Again the reproductive powers develop in the females at least five or six years in advance of the males and it is natural and right that the man should be older in age than his wife.

Naturally the older in age has got more strength and intelligence than the younger and that is why the older is everywhere honored more than the younger. When even in the case of the males, the younger becomes subject to his elder, what wonder that the wife should naturally be younger than her husband and would be subject to him? For this reason Manu has said that the females do not deserve independence.

It is taking an utterly mistaken view of things to compare the subjection of women with the subjection of the slaves. In reality there is nothing of the kind in the subjection of women. Just as the son is subject to his father, the younger brother to his elder, so is the wife subject to the husband and that is based on the fact that the older in age is stronger and is more experienced and it

is always safe to give him the lead. It is not claimed that man should illtreat and oppress the wife. On the other hand it should be borne in mind that she is the intellectual companion of her husband, his friend and helper in life. The husband's work lies in the outword world, the wife's duties lie in the effecient management of domestic functions.

It is essential for the good of humanity that their respective duties are laid out and clearly separate from each other. Only by a proper division of labor can we secure real harmony and national progress. As the son comes to guide the father by his affection and care, the wife's love subdues the natural aggressiveness of the husband's position till they come to respect each other and work for each other's good.

#### Seclusion of Women.

It may be said that if you mean that the wife is to be subject of the husband in the same sense that the son is to the father, how do you account for the seclusion of females? Why do you treat men and women differently? Why do you condemn if a woman remarries after the death of her husband, and why do you not allow the unchaste woman to live in your society, although the same offences in the case of man are lightly passed over? This is a distinction which may well be called oppression. This is evidently due to the abuse of powers by man. We shall try to meet this view in the chapter on marriage. Here we shall take up only the question of the seclusion of females.

Before entering into this question let us consider another point. God has made all the parts of a man's physical body equally open to public gaze and none has been covered by nature. Why is he diffident in exposing some of these parts? Like the others limbs, they have been created by God to perform some special functions. Why then these parts are regarded as private? If we think over this matter it will appear that the same principle is at work in the system of seclusion of the females.

There are no fixed periods for man as in the case of the lower animals to gratify their sexual instincts. The evils of frequent gratification, the diseases it brings about, the interference with business which it entails are all too well known to need specification. For the good of society therefore it becomes necessary to minimise the opportunities of gratification and also of excitement. An object of pleasure which is always before the eyes and in the memory, certainly induces a desire in man towards the attainment of that object in addition to strengthening the desires. In order to cease doing anything we have got to keep aloof from it, and put it out of our memory. That is why we have got to associate with good people, and to keep our time and attention preoccupied in order to get rid of certain vices. In order to chase away any sorrow we have got to turn our attention to some thing else. To avoid frequent gratification of the senses it is absolutely necessary to avoid the company of the females and hearing filthy words &c.

For thereby the exciting cause being absent, the senses are not stimulated.

There is no inherent sin in using obscene words so in remaining naked except that they serve to excite the passions. When man was naked he was given to frequent gratification of the senses. Dress operated as a restraint. The next restraint which society brought in was the prohibition to use obscene words to keep off the memory of these passions. These restraints were found to be not sufficient, the passions worked as before because of the free intercourse between the sexes. The sages characterised the females as "jar full of butter" and the males "as pieces of live charcoal" meaning that you cannot prevent their connection, if you bring them together. Society therefore fixed different habitations for the sexes - man was given the outer apartments to live in, woman being relegated to the inner. It was for the same reason that separate pathways were fixed for the two sexes as well as separate places of their activities. Frequent sight of beautiful woman causes excitement even in the minds of an anchorite, and that is why it was enjoined that the wife should come out before no males except her husband, and it was regarded as the most heinous of sins for those who must necessarily live in close touch with the family, her near relatives, to cast an eye of lust upon her.

It can't be said that there is nothing like a zenana system in Europe, even there it is not given to woman to roam about at her sweet will.



But a slight looseness of this system produces plenty of vices. Owing to this system of seclusion, India claims to be motherland of *Sati* or chaste women. With the advent of the Western civilisation there has come a laxity in the system, and prostitution has increased considerably. Some say what is the value of this forced chastity? The chastity of those who are placed in the midst of temptations is really praiseworthy. We are afraid God has not intended such praise for us, because if it were possible not to eat luscious food ready at hand in spite of hunger, not to see any beautiful object in spite of the eyes, not to hear sweet music in spite of the ears, it would not be within the range of possibility to remain unmoved in the presence of a woman who combines in her everything that is calculated to attract the senses,—it is just an impossibility as the magnet ceasing to attract iron. Because the powers implanted in us by God must find their action. Not in human kingdom alone but in the rest of the sentient creation there is that tendency for the two sexes to come together. The lower animals follow a fixed rule of God and there is no chance of their going astray, but there being no hard and fast rules in the case of man, he has got to avert the mischief which would otherwise be his lot by following the beneficent rules devised by society and civilisation. That is how the institutions of marriage and separate living have come into existence, and adultery has been prohibited. Without these rules man would never have succeeded in controlling his passions and without these rules

disasters of the society would have been unlimited. Moral instructions alone can never destroy the force of natural passions. Fancy the functions of the eyes coming to an end at the mere bidding that yonder beautiful object should not be looked at? Would that be possible? So if the ideal of chastity is recognised, if adultery and promiscuous intercourse of the two sexes are deemed mischievous, we see no other way of getting out of the evil than by prohibiting free meeting of the sexes by inaugurating the system of seclusion and relegating each sex to its proper sphere of activity. The view that man can be self-controlled in the presence of easily accessible objects of enjoyment is based on error and grave misunderstanding of the laws of nature.

The present day Bengalis are getting weaker and shortlived day by day; the frequent opportunities of meeting with the other sex, in our opinion, are at the bottom of it. Frequent company leads to enjoyment and produces physical weakness; the offsprings share the same weakness with their parents, no satisfaction arises from the fulfilment of desires and the bond of love gradually slackens. The very best of things if constantly enjoyed loses its pristine attraction to a certain extent. The sight of a friend who comes from afar after a length of time is more welcome and pleasurable than the frequent sight of him. Consideration of these things and the weakness of the females make it clear that the two sexes should have separate places to live in and to work in. That is why the household has been divided into the outer and the inner apartments and not for the purpose

of shutting the other sex in. Just as the females are not permitted to keep the company of the males, so the males are kept out of the company and society of the females. Each sex can do its duty in its own sphere and society. The duty of the females consists in the proper management of the household and the rearing and training of children on basis of religion and morality. The welfare and strength of a nation depend upon religion and morality, the greatness of a nation depends upon the nature of the womanhood. For it is the woman who is the trainer and educator of our children in their infancy and if she is moral and truly religious the greatness of the nation to which she belongs is confirmed. Now-a-days there is a general cry for female emancipation in India. This is generally based on the Western lines of improvement, which are quite unsuited to a place like India, where a family does not consist only of husband and wife and where the air breathes spirituality. These reformers cry that the women here are kept shut up within the four walls of their houses and are treated worse than slaves. They are no longer sources of relief and consolation to their husbands in times of misfortune and that they are only child producing machines. A little consideration will show how erroneous this view is. The females in India have as much liberty in their own sphere of duties as men have in their own. The only difference is that men have a wider range as they have varied and multifarious works to perform than the females. Even now-a-days in the villages the females often

go out of their houses when invited at some festivities. There they have their separate places of entertainment and amusement. They go out to perform ablutions in the river but they have got their separated bathing places. As no male can enter within these separated places, so the females cannot come into the places set apart for the males. It is only in great cities where there is much bustle that the seclusion is rather enforced. The females in India are taught lessons in religion and morality and the management of domestic affairs which is certainly the best form of education they may have as they are placed by Nature. We are going out of the scope of this little book and we shall end here by holding that the females in India are not really shut up as it were, but they have their fullest liberty in their own spheres of work.

### Marriage.

Western civilisation has been trying to undermine our institution of marriage so at the present day we find various theories of marriage based more or less on the Western ideal. Some hold that marriage is unnecessary, and a promiscuous sort of life as we find in the lower animals would serve the purpose equally well; while others regard that marriage should be based on mutual attraction and love of the two sexes, and that the bond of marriage should continue to exist so long as love exists, ceasing with its termination, while yet others hold that marriage tie should be indissoluble the whole life through. Some think that it is best that

husband and wife should choose each other, while others hold that their parents should choose for them. Some hold that early age to be best suited for marriage, others again would like to defer it to an advanced period of life. Some give license both to the widower and the widow to remarry, while others are for the remarriage of the widower only and not of the widow.

Let us consider another fact before we proceed to deal with these views. There is no such law or rule in Nature which is absolutely good or absolutely bad. Not to speak of rules framed by human beings, to every law of God this remark is applicable. The same food which goes to keep us alive is also the cause of our death, the love which ties one to the family is also the cause of indifference to it, the elements of water, air and fire absolutely needed for our existence and activities are also the causes of our destruction and mischief and so on.

So good or bad is never meant to be understood in the absolute sense, they are used in the relative sense. That must be called good which has in it a greater proportion of good than evil. It is an impossibility to meet with anything absolutely good or absolutely bad in the world of ours. Thus by the best rules of conduct we simply mean such as are productive of much amount of good and which reduce the evil that is produced along with it to a negligible factor. Man tries in various ways to obviate and check any evil he may find. It may be that all evils are not done away with, but there are certain evils which can be averted. That law

is deemed to be the best by following which we can avoid the greatest amount of evil. So in considering whether any law is good or bad we must look to the amount of evil it produces and accept that which generates the least of it. The same principle applies in the case of the rules regarding marriage institutions.

We need not attempt at proving that the institution of marriage is more beneficial than the system that obtains in the animal kingdom. Those who condemn marriage say that it is a sort of bondage which to a great extent hampers the freedom of men, who should profitably follow the example of the lower animals which secures to them the enjoyments minus the responsibilities of married life.

This argument will appear to be extremely fallacious on a little consideration. If instead of the marriage institution the example of the lower animals were followed what would have been the result? No man would even come to know his father, nor could any one enjoy the pleasure of having a child whom he could call his own. All the duties and worries of rearing up the children would have devolved upon the mother and the children would have lost the benefit of a father's care. Man would have dissipated his energy in idleness, his whole life's work being confined to maintain himself, and his conditions would not have been very far removed from that of the animals. Without the institutions of marriage there would have been no family and society which is at the root of human progress, in fact man could have none of the

essentially human characteristics. Without this institution all sorts of happiness would have been denied to man, he would not have the benefit of the aid of wife, sons, brothers and others at the time of need and distress and would not have tasted the pleasures of love at all. No one would have known his father, brother, sister, son, daughter and all the rest of them. Mother would have been the only object of love on this earth. She also would not have been capable of keeping the children to her all the time because it is impossible for a woman to earn a livelihood for her own self and her children. The latter must have been turned adrift unto the wide world to shift for themselves as best as they could when they came of age, and thus there would have been a separation of the mother and children as in the case of the animals. There would have been no scope for the parental and filial affections to grow. On the otherhand intellectual achievements would have been sadly at a discount owing to man having been forced to earn his living at a comparatively early age and to continue to struggle throughout his life.

To meet these difficulties the institution of marriage has been devised. It primarily arose out of the union of man with his consort upon terms which were imposed by her and to which the man must have agreed by the force of natural attraction. The terms and conditions of such union must have been that the husband would rear up the children, would stand by the wife in times of difficulty and that

the wife would follow the husband on account of the benefits received. Once that the institution was established it was cemented by the love and affection, the peace and happiness incidental to married life. If it had no advantage men would not have willingly undertaken the responsibilities of a married life and the system would not have existed all the world over. This institution presupposes that man has left the primary state of Nature behind him and that he is on his way to civilisation, and it is the one institution, which is at the root of all human progress. It is perfectly idle and utterly erroneous to hold that marriage institution is of no good.

We would hardly call that union marriage which were to last for the term of mutual love. Such an union would not be very far removed from the sexual union of lower animals. In a great majority of cases, love depends upon conditions which are constantly changing. A poor man is satisfied with a shilling, when he works up his way to a decent living he wants a pound, and when he is tolerably rich he probably wants hundreds and so on. A man who can get none, will be satisfied with an ugly wife, but when he finds that he can get a better one, he grows cold on his former wife, the love decreases and there is a desire in him to get the better one. It frequently so happens that a man marries a wife whom he thinks for the time being to be best object of his love and attention, but with the appearance of a better object the original love wanes and the man becomes



more and more attached to the new object of his love. Again many people prefer the younger to the older woman for an aversion towards the old and an attraction for the new. So if the period of married life were to last the period of mutual love, there could be no chance of permanent union, and the evils of society consequent upon frequent separations and new unions, would be appalling. The very object of marriage would be frustrated. Genuine and true love, and sympathy would never grow up between the parties and there would be no regard for the parents nor affection for the children.

The children would find many husbands of the mother and many wives of the father and too many brothers and sisters to claim their fraternal affinities and affection. In such cases, separation of the children from the father or the mother would be inevitable ; because in the majority of cases children would be generally born shortly after the marriage of their parents, and it is likely that the divorce would take place after the birth of the children. When there is separation of the man and the wife, one of them must give up the custody of the children. Besides there can be no order in a home which sees frequent changes of its mistress. Husband, wife, son, daughter, father, mother, brother, sister &c constitute a family and the society is merely a congregation of families. It is no family at all where we do not find a solidarity of the ties amongst its individual members. Nor is the society composed of such families worth the name at all.

For the reasons stated above, it is absolutely neces-

sary to make the marriage tie firm and lasting, and the Indo-Aryan sages have distinctly laid down that the marriage bond is to last for ever. Based as they are on such a noble conception of the nuptial union, the parental and filial devotion, the conjugal love, brotherly affection, and regard and respect for the other relations that we find in them, the Hindu families stand unsurpassed in any society on the face of the earth. Few people else are so spiritual, charitable and virtuous as they are. It is through the marriage tie that man takes his first lessons in selflessness and altruism.

#### **Brahma Form of Marriage.**

In this form, the burden of choosing the husband and the wife falls to the parents, whereas in the *Gandharvâ* form the choice rests with the parties. Let us now see which of these two forms is the better. The partisans of the *Gandharva* form say that a lifelong marriage tie being the most beneficial to our interests and that a conflict of feelings between the parties being a source of trouble and unhappiness all through, it is advisable that the man and the wife should be pleasing and attractive to each other, and that it is proper that the parties concerned should be entrusted with the choice of each other's partner because none else can make the choice of one's companion for life.

We hold quite an opposite view because it is more likely that the older relations having a varied experience are better fitted to select the partners with an eye to their welfare such as the inexperienced youth can hardly be expected to do. The age of the parties

at which marriage takes place or ought to take place is not calculated to give them much experience or foresight either as to their own welfare or as to anything in the world for the matter of that. They are not to be credited at that stage with the power of analysing the complex human nature, as very often the appearances belie the real natures within. Not to speak of the inexperienced, the experienced are at times deceived by such appearances, and it requires a profound insight into the nature of man and things to be able to decipher the mystery of human nature. It is not given to the young, inexperienced, simple and guileless hearts to be always able to act in furtherance of their future welfare and to refuse to lend an willing ear the venomed and artificial sweetness of the crafty and the cunning. Not unoften in old age we are aroused by a rude shock of misbehaviour on the part of a friend or relation of ours to the recognition of the painful fact that the estimate we had formed and the opinion we had hitherto entertained with regard to the individual is nothing but a serious error. What wonder that under such circumstances the youths will be deceived by appearances at every step? Especially physical charm being the chief factor of attraction to the young it is the only consideration that weighs with them in the matter of the selection of their partner. It is this attraction for external beauty that leads man to neglect the sweetness of nature in an ugly body and blinded by the alluring exterior to overlook the rotten interior. So the sages have more than once repeated that the

bride longs for beauty of the bridegroom, the mother desires his wealth, the father his education, the other relations his social position, and those that are perfectly unconcerned only for a sumptuous dinner.

One enamoured of beauty cannot be expected to form a just estimate of those qualities which would go towards making his life happy. Beauty of form and qualities of the intellect are not the only points to be considered, but there are many others which have to be considered to make a proper selection of married couples, e.g. their relative age, the education, health, strength, the family and the society they come from, their capacity for business, the character of their parents, the presence or absence of hereditary diseases in the family, compatibility of their tempers, consanguinity and such other things. It is not expected that a young man of twenty and a girl of sixteen have got the powers necessary to carefully weigh and analyse all these points in a dispassionate mood. Do they care for these things at all when they are enamoured of each other's beauty? On the other hand love gives a charm to the most unworthy object so as to make it appear as the most perfect embodiment of everything that is best and noblest on the face of the earth, and if there is love between the parties it is right that it should be so for otherwise how could there be any love? There is no room for looking into the real worth. Man is utterly lost to all calm deliberation when he is over head and ears in love and that is why Cupid has been painted blind. In fact an enamoured heart can never be checked, not to speak of

looking for defects in the object of love, one is purposely blind to them even if they are pointed out by others. But such love based on attraction of physical beauty only irrespective of the qualities of character can never be permanent. It certainly lasts so long as the excitement of the prime of youth continues, or so long as the romance of first love has not worn out, but soon the time for calm consideration comes, and the parties come to realise the mistakes of their choice and begin to rue for it.

There are other defects also in the system of selection by the young people. It is not always the case that the attraction would be mutual, it may be completely one-sided. It is very often noticed that the most self-sacrificing love is returned with a profound indifference, nay, even with scorn and contempt. In such cases the wished—for union becomes impossible and one of the parties at least is doomed to a life-long suffering which may paralyse the noblest of nature. Sometimes the parties without considering their own positions aspire to unions with others much above in their stations in life with the result that reciprocity of feelings becomes impossible and even if there be mutual love, difficulties and dangers in other directions make their lives miserable. Thus it is never safe to rely on the young to select his consort by himself, the parents experienced as they are and always striving after the well-being of their children, may be safely entrusted with the task of choosing the bride or the bridegroom, so that there may not be any room for youthful rashness or folly. Practical

experience also proves that this system is the best of its kind. The number of divorce cases in the West and the continuance of the happy married life among the Indians afford practical proof of this truth. But at the present moment it is next to impossible to point out the advantages of this system in India, owing to many defects that have already crept into that society which render the parents incapable of conducting themselves rightly and discharging their duties properly in the matter of such selection. If the defects be remedied, the practices antagonistic to the Shastric injunctions be weeded out, the Indian system would stand in prominent relief to all others in the world as the very best that humanity can aspire to within the range of practical human institutions. Then would conjugal life be one of continuous felicity, the highest and noblest example of conjugal love.

We shall deal with another point. Happiness of the family does not depend on the concord between the husband and the wife alone. The wife must come up to the choice of the parents if the continuance of the family union under the beneficent rule of the father can be successfully maintained. A separation with the rest of the family ultimately brought about by the faults of the wife is not a very rare instance to find. It is one of the causes of separated families in Western countries. There instances are many in which the parents are seen to drag on a miserable existence in spite of the opulence of their sons. Is marriage meant only for the pleasure of the individual or is it not meant

to enable us to perform our duties to man and God without impediments? Unless one is married it is impossible for him to discharge all the duties of life effectually. It is because that such duties are so easily and perfectly fulfilled with the aid of the wife that she is called by the Hindu his partner in religion.

Marriage which is brought about by the urging of the passions can never instil this sense of duty in the partners, whose attentions and right-thinking are blinded by the influence of a dominant emotion for satisfaction of their desires and expression their love to each other. Whereas the couple selected by the parents after due consideration, can keep an eye to the discharge of their duties and also to the happiness and welfare of the members of their family and society in preference to their own enjoyments.

There is yet another objection to marriage based on sexual selection. This system was not unknown to the Indians of the past as is well-evidenced by the *Gandharba* and the *Swayambara* forms of marriage. They have been discontinued by the injunctions of the sages when their evil effects were fully localised. These two systems are natural and therefore barbarous, while the Brahma form is the invention of the civilised society. It is never intended that barbarism is to be preferred to civilisation, and this is the reason why no marriage takes place only on the consent of the man and the woman on any part of the world. Those who think that in the Western countries marriage depends only on the consent of the young man and his wife are

sadly mistaken. In fact in the cultured and higher circles although the consent of the bridegroom and the bride is taken, no marriage ever takes place so long as it is not sanctioned by the parents. So that the form prevailing there cannot be termed as *Gandharba* form of marriage. Moreover manifold troubles arise out of such marriages. Failure in love has got to account for not a small number of suicides and even murders. Judging therefore from their social effects, it is better not to depend on the consent of the married couples as the sole consideration.

But it is highly beneficial to give an opportunity to our children to choose their partners out of those already selected by their parents, because in that case there is no chance of choosing wrongly or counting disappointment. On the other hand the double process of selection is likely to make the union desirable in all respects and beneficial to the parties.

#### Early Marriage.

Let us now consider what should be the marriageable age of girls and boys. The Europeans are against the system of early marriage. But when it is proved that *Gandharba* form of marriage is pernicious in its effects, the ceremony should be celebrated even before the desire for a partner grows, because if one remains unmarried to a rather advanced age, there is likelihood of an attachment being formed with someone. If that attachment is misplaced and the parents stand in the way, suffering is the result. If marriage takes place in childhood this difficulty is avoided. Moreover the marriage tie



is generally more secure and strong in cases of marriages at an early age than where it takes place at an advanced age, because any attachment during the impressionable age is sincere, and connections then formed are likely to be firm and permanent. That is why friends of childhood are loved throughout life.

It is no wonder that sincere and pure love should grow up in childhood when the heart is soft and pure, when selfishness has not polluted the mind, when doubt and unbelief and the crooked ways of the world have not yet clouded the mental and moral atmospheres. Our earliest attachments are most deeply impressed. As we grow up in years, selfishness, doubt, unbelief, passionateness and worldliness grow in intensity and we lose our pristine simplicity and purity. Thus love or attachment in an advanced age is mostly based on calculations—either of beauty or of qualification, or of wealth or of some other object which may appeal to the gratification of our selfish instinct—it can never be the unselfish and spontaneous emotion of youth. Love born of such considerations disappears with gratification, or dies if the end is not secured, but love formed in childhood is not killed by any extraneous considerations as it is not based on selfish motives. Such love forms a part of the nature like the natural affection of the parent for the child and therefore never dies. The system of marriage at an advanced age as obtains in the Western world is mainly to account for a larger number of divorce cases there. On the other-hand the widow in India abhors the idea of separation

from her husband even by death and follows her lord to the funeral pyre. This is possible only because there is child-marriage in India.

Those who say that the widows follow their husbands to the funeral pyres because they are afraid of the mighty sorrows that would be their portion during their widowhood owing to the social disabilities are sadly mistaken. There can be no doubt that sincere love and sense of duty are the motive powers of the practice. It may be said that why do not the husbands die with their wives? Do they not love their wives? We shall try to answer this when dealing with widow-remarriage.

Another reason why in case of early marriage love grows deeper is that at that age both the wife and the husband have not their fixed tendencies and habits of thought which go to make up their personlity. Each can mould oneself into the habits and tendencies of the other, and there is every chance of that perfect union which is so essential to true love. Whereas at an advanced age the minds must have formed definite tendencies and beliefs, and there are more chances of conflict of ideas and feelings. There being difference in ideas there cannot be a perfect unity of views, for long-standing beliefs and tendencies can never be totally effaced and blotted out. Therefore if marriage and love are to last for life, it is better that the former should be canonised at an early age. Early marriage has another recommendation, *viz*, that the married couple can associate no impure thoughts with the

connection they are going to form. They feel as if the union is a heavenly one.

In marriages at an advanced age this purity is not only absent, but impure thoughts of carnal desires and their satisfaction fill the mind. A married woman has to follow her husband to his home. Specially indecorous would be the conduct of the wife who has got to leave her parents and go direct to her husband's home immediately after marriage. Is it not a shameful and ungrateful behaviour on the part of the woman to snap asunder the ties of regard for parents, affection for brothers and sisters, and friendship with the companions of her childhood who had done so much for her, and to follow a man known for a very short time only? Is it an act worthy of human beings or of civilisation? Has God made the female so obdurate and so shameless? The woman who does so really shames her sisters. The child-wife on the other hand is not under the necessity of committing such an act. Before she leaves her father's house, she is taught that the husband is the dearest friend she has on earth. She sees her husband often in her father's house as well as in her father-in-law's home, and gradually comes to think of him and love him as a companion of childhood and as the dearest friend. She lives sometimes in her father's place and sometimes in her husband's home and has thus the opportunity of serving them both and of adopting herself to the ways and manners of her husband's home. So that if purity, love, gratefulness, modesty and absence of obscenity be considered

as the signs of enlightenment, the system of early-marriage is certainly an institution worthy of enlightened society. Marriage in an advanced age is natural and is therefore barbarous, while child-marriage, being artificial and beneficial, is significant of civilisation.

But that is no reason why marriage should take place in infancy for early love and burden of a family consequent upon it may stand against the opportunities for education and bring about poverty, and the children born at a premature age are likely to be weak and short-lived. The advocates of the Western system condemn early marriage on these grounds without caring to look to its advantages. But these defects may be remedied by marrying our sons at a comparatively advanced age. Science has proved that the offsprings of a man of mature age, although the female be young, are not weak. The laws of nature point us to the fact that the powers of generation in man comes at least 5 or 6 years later than in woman. So it is right and natural that the man must be more advanced in age than his wife. Again acquisition of knowledge and of powers for acquiring means for subsistence must necessarily take sometime in the case of man. Moreover as the males have not got to leave their father's home after marriage as the females must, no harm is done if they are married at a comparatively advanced age. So according to Manu a man of twenty-four years of age is to be mated with a girl of eight, and a man of 30 with a girl of 12. To us it appears that at the present day a boy of 20 or 22 should be married to a girl of 11 or 12. Because man

is not so long-lived as he happened to be before, and the marriage will not stand in his way to acquire knowledge as there is no opportunity now-a-days of reading the Vedas which took so long a time in the days of yore, and at the present times one can get through the Civil Service Examinations within 20 or 22 years. Those, amongst the well-to-do people, who are not engaged in education or business, should be married even a little earlier, because there being no work to do, the propensities natural to youth may be misdirected so as to make them lack in morality or to form undesirable attachments at an early age. It is therefore better that they should be married before such a chance can come to them.

Some might say why should the females be not permitted an extension of marriageable age for the purposes of education? Should the females get no education? We certainly say that the females should have a training, but it is not necessary that they should have quite the same education as men. The nature of education necessary for females does not necessitate a postponement of their marriage to an advanced age. However early they may be married, it must be borne in mind that they should in no case be permitted to have marital connection before their powers of procreation are matured. In that case there is no apprehension of the offsprings being weaklings. That is why the Shastric authorities have enjoined a particular ceremony to be performed before marriage can be consummated. Before that ceremony is performed the man and the wife should in no case live together. If this rule is followed there is

no chance of any harm being done however early the marriage might take place. But as there is also the apprehension of widowhood, marriages should not take place too early.

Some say that in early marriages the husband and the wife can never understand the real import of the ceremony they go through, and as such they are in no way bound to keep the promise of conjugal fidelity they make at the time of marriage. What do you mean by saying that they can't understand the import of the ceremony at an early age? If it is meant that they can't understand the object of marriage because their carnal desires are not active, you imply thereby that the object of marriage is the satisfaction of the senses only. In that case there is no necessity in trying to meet this argument. In fact the object of marriage is not so contemptible as that. It is not the element of promise that keeps the marriage in force for the whole life. Man very often breaks his promises. If promises were at the root of marriage there would have been frequent separations. So that it is better that we should not understand the meanings of the *mantras* at all, but regard marriage as a heavenly tie sanctified and strengthened by sacred texts which we regard as divine although we know not their meanings.

**Marriage between of the Members of the same Caste.**

It has been said that the mere union of minds between the man and his wife is not the object of marriage, its main object being to procreate good children and to manage the family affairs smoothly. So that it

will never do merely to secure a reciprocity of feelings between the married pair, but we must always look for healthy conditions suitable to the birth of strong and virtuous children, besides securing a partner for the efficient performance of household duties. In no country other than in India is this ideal so steadily kept in view. In any other place they only keep themselves to the linking of the husband and the wife for each other. In the Western countries, the relative age of the husband and the wife, their manners in relationship, their position in life or family of birth receives but very little consideration and are no bars to marriage. Each other's liking being secured, a thousand other hindrances do not count.

But a neglect of these conditions is highly unnatural and injurious. It is well-known that the age at which a girl is fit to become a mother is not sufficient for the boy to be a father, and hence marriage of a man with a woman older than himself or of equal age is against Nature and harmful without any doubt. Marriage between cognatic and agnatic relations is productive of incest, impurity, strife and other inconveniences. Again the offsprings of the parents closely related to each other have many defects. This has been admitted by the modern Embryology. There is a greater probability of harmony of minds and convenience of business if both the man and the wife are drawn from the same class of people as regards rank, position and occupation in life, which is impossible in a case where their natures and habits differ. As the children inherit the virtues and vices of their parents,

it is necessary, for the birth of good children, that our girls should be married to youths of higher and nobler families. We shall deal with this more fully when we come to Caste-system.

Another feature of the Indian marriage system is that at the time of marriage no impure thought pollutes the minds of the bridegroom and the bride. They are veiled, so to say, in an atmosphere of heavenly feelings. This system of marriage is the best way of introducing the girl to one hitherto unknown to her, with whom she will have to live throughout her life, when she would leave her parents whom she had hitherto known as the only objects of her respect and affection. It appeals to the heart, and is the best and fittest way of joining the two souls together. The bridegroom, the bride and the other relations regard marriage as a duty and a sacrament that must be performed, and the day of marriage is observed in Hindu families as a very auspicious one. On that day there are rejoicing, singing and dancing, gathering of all friends and relatives, sumptuous feasts, charity to the poor, decoration of the house, the offering of oblations to ancestors, and diversions of various other kinds which render the ceremony as one of purest enjoyment, while maintaining its dignity as an essential sacrament. The condition are so much helpful to the growth of genuine attachment for life that neither registration nor witnesses are thought of as necessary. No other country can boast of a marriage institution so pure and harmonising as this. Marriage in other countries is regarded as a social contract and is never



celebrated without witnesses and registrations. But is it not absolutely ridiculous to bring in contract in affairs of love, in devotion, in regard and esteem? Does this procedure express any one of the higher and purer aspects of human nature? Is there any sweetness or purity of love in such a contractual conception of marriage? In India marriage is a part of religion and the wife is regarded as the partner in religion. It is a means of progress by the tenderness, patience and unselfishness which it teaches. The Indian couple is unparalleled in their love and fidelity. To those who take the false step of discarding such a system for that of the West, we cannot but say that they have missed the mission of man's life—the embodiment in physical conditions of the inherent divinity in man.

#### **Widow Remarriage.**

The efficient fulfilment of the aforesaid ideal requires a life-long marital connection which is incompatible with the remarriage of widows. But the younger generations of this country are entirely forgetful of the knowledge of social economy their forefathers possessed and are very enthusiastic over the question of widow remarriage. The Indians have been depicted by them as most selfish and cruel in as much as although they allow the widower to remarry any number of wives, the widow is debarred from taking to herself another husband. But to us it seems that this objection is worse than superficial. The evil effects of widow-remarriage and the cause of its prohibition will be apparent to them if they are pleased to bestow a little serious consideration on the subject

It appears on enquiry that in every country a number of females remain unmarried. The social rules, although they are different in different countries are so framed that under them a certain proportion of females must remain unmarried. No country can boast of a social economy that secures to every woman the continuous enjoyment throughout life of the company and protection of her husband. It seems that God never intended all women to enjoy the company of their husbands for ever. Widow-remarriage is in vogue in England and there are many women who are obliged to remain unmarried throughout life. In India, widow-remarriage is prohibited and the men are permitted to take more than one wife, but still we find much difficulty here to marry our maiden daughters. In the Western India, people used to kill their girls to be saved from the enormous trouble and expense of finding a suitable match for them. Thus it appears that certain girls in every society must be denied the benefit of the company and protection of husbands. If we admit this necessary evil, is it not far better that our widows should not remarry rather than deny the maidens any chance throughout their lives? In that case there is an impartiality, speaking from the point of view of society, with respect to every woman and household affairs go on smoothly. The rule which gives ten chances to one, and not even one chance to another is certainly partial.

If widow-remarriage is allowed there can be no stability in our family relations. No home can be permanent

without its permanent mistress. The females live in their parents' house during childhood and come to be settled in the home of their husbands after marriage, and there they strive after putting the household to order with a zeal and earnestness that they seldom show in the management of their fathers' household. But if the wife knows that in the event of her husband's death she will have to find another home for herself, why should she take the same interest in the household of her husband for the time being? In that case nothing of permanent importance and utility would engage her attention. So also if the husband knows that after his death his wife will leave his children and his home and find another home for herself, he is not likely to be interested in having a settled household. The Western world illustrates this clearly, most of the people there have no settled home, they live in hotels to the very end of their lives. The system of widow-remarriage accounts for the terrible hardships of the poor people and there is so much disorder in the household affairs. The man in the most indigent circumstances in India has his fixed place of abode and his permanent neighbours whose sympathy and support he can count upon in times of need and distress. As they have a settled home, they can get loans in times of difficulties from the money-lenders, whereas men would hesitate from advancing loans to middle class people in England, because the latter seldom have any tangible property that the creditor can look to. There is no doubt that the same miserable state of things would

have obtained in India, if widow-remarriage had been introduced here.

Remarriage of widows who have got children is still more pernicious in its effects. Because in that case the children must either be parted from the mother or from the relations in the father's family. Indians have a taste of the sufferings they get from their stepmothers, but not those from the stepfathers. There is no doubt that the children must suffer terrible hardships in case their mother remarries.

Widow-remarriage is untenable even from the point of view of Western scientists. Malthus has proved that if the population goes on increasing at the usual rate some must go unfed. The increase of food is not proportionate to the increase of population, so procreation must be checked to a certain extent. Now-a-days we have constant famines and epidemics which may be safely put down to this cause. Does it not therefore the prohibition of widow-remarriage serve as an efficient check upon the growth of population while at the same time maintaining the sanctity of marriage relation and the integrity of the family? If this view is correct, not to speak of widow-remarriage, widowers should also be prohibited from taking a second wife. Should the sympathisers of the sufferings of the widows not be moved with those of the bachelors and maids? Should their hearts not melt with the sufferings of those stricken with famines and epidemics? Have they no share of their sympathy for the troubles consequent upon the looseness of family relations and the sufferings of those that are born poor?

If widow-remariage is permitted, the exercise of the highest human qualities such as love, regard and affections for the dear and near relations, philanthropic and altruistic activities are relegated to the back-ground only to give man opportunities for the satisfaction of his selfish and animal propensities. The Western world, though illumined with the light of wisdom and high civilisation has not been able to shake off the last traces of animalism yet simply because it has not been able to preserve the sanctity of the marriage tie.

Widow-remarriage has been prohibited owing to the aforesaid social and moral inconveniences, otherwise what is the reason of its being discontinued when it was in vogue in ancient India? Indian sages were not so cruel or selfish as to sacrifice the widows at the altar of their own selfish pleasures as is the view maintained by some, because they see the widowers are permitted to remarry. Remarriage of the widower has been allowed because it never produces those evil effects which the remarriage of the widows bring about. Again there is a dearth of bridegrooms in Indian society in spite of man being permitted to take more wives than one, and this dearth will go on increasing if the remarriage of the widowers is prohibited. Many girls would then be left unmarried lifelong and grow up as old maids for want of husbands. This is the reason why remarriage of the widowers has not been prohibited. But that is no excuse for a man to remarry when he is old or when he has got grown-up children.

Promiscuous intercourse and sexual immorality have

been condemned by the Shastras as highly sinful for both the sexes. But the Sastric injunctions have been more vigorously enforced in the case of woman simply because the immorality of woman is more pernicious to society and affords opportunities for the introduction of illegitimate children into the bosom of society. Again the charge of maintaining the child which is thus conceived in sin, nurtured in darkness and born in shame falls most unjustly to the lot of the husband. Moreover does not the rigorous enforcement of a life of strict chastity upon woman act as the most efficient indirect check upon the immorality of men? Look to the condition of countries where the same strict idea does not prevail and find out the answer. Immorality of women has thus been put down with rigor on account of the manifold social evils dependent on it and not on account of the selfishness of men or with a view to oppress the helpless sex. We shall conclude the chapter here with reproducing the words of the great English woman, Mrs. Annie Besant on the subject: "Let it suffice to say briefly that Hinduism presents man and woman as complementary halves of a single whole, each supplying what the other lacks. It regards the marriage union as applying to all parts of the nature and as passing therefore unchanged into the worlds beyond death, unmarred by the loss of the physical body. It considers husband and wife as spiritually one even as they are physically united, and it fosters so intense a love and devotion in the wife to the husband that the ideal Hindu wife could not dream of a transference of

that affection to another. This love to the husband is interwoven with the very fibre of the Hindu woman's life. "Mayest thou be as Savitri" must no longer be said to the young wife, if a second man may draw her to his bosom. And surely it is worthy of consideration whether this intensity of love, with all that it implies is to be eradicated in the hearts of Hindu women, by reducing marriage from a sacrament to a contract.

Many, however, do not advocate the remarriage of widows in general, but only virgin-widows. In this relation we have to face the fact that there are more marriageable women than marriageable men. Boys die in greater number than girls. There must be, therefore, a surplus of women, either of widows or of spinsters. In the West, there is a large class of unmarried women shut out from all the joys of wifehood and motherhood, and often compelled to earn a precarious living by drudgery and prolonged toil. So numerous are these that the education of women has been revolutionised, in order to enable them to compete with men in trades and profession. We then do not solve the problem of the sad lot of solitary women by permitting virgin-widows to remarry. Every widow remarried means one unmarried girl the more. We only transfer the solitariness from the widow to the maid.

Secondly, the larger number of virgin-widows is due to child marriage, and the number would be far more wisely checked by preventing premature marriage than by remarrying widows. The higher death-rate among boys disappears after 14 years of age. The delay of

marriage to reasonable age, at which the girl shall be physiologically fit to bear a child without undue strain on herself and without entailing physical weakness on her offspring is demanded alike by science and by morality. This change will save large number of girls from widow-hood and will abolish child-widow-hood entirely.

The lot of widows may be changed by making them the willing helpers of their sex. In the West, tens of thousands of women willingly embrace the celibate life in order to devote themselves to intercessory prayer and meditation, or to serve as nurses of the sick poor, as guardians of helpless orphans and the friendless aged. How many good works in India are crippled for lack of such a class and Indian orphans are cared for by Christian women, because none of their own faith are available for such charitable duties. Here is a vast field of noble labour, of peaceful and happy usefulness for any Indian widow whose hands are not already filled with helpful services in their homes. Society cannot exist without the service of self-abnegating women, who are free from immediate personal ties. Widowhood is a call to such service and lives thus passed have the sweetest consolations for the loss of husbands' and of children's love.

Some who take the highest view of marriage urge that the widower should not remarry any more than the widow; and doubtless no second marriage would follow a perfect marriage. The wife would ever remain the wife; none other would share her throne. None the



less we may recognise the fact that nature enforces a certain difference in love borne by husband to wife and by wife to husband. The long months, during which the woman bears within her body the coming child, weave into her being a tenderer and more clinging and dependent love than that of the man; the subtle physical and emotional energies which built up the babe affect the whole of the mother's nature, and the father of her child becomes the centre of a golden web of pure and passionate feelings. He stands for her apart from all humanity, he whose creative touch transformed her into mother and wrought in her the miracle of the child. Unconsciously this difference is felt, even when not reasoned on, and popular feeling regards differently the remarriage of the widower and of the widow. There are other reasons for this feeling historical and social. But in any case, those who urge perpetual widowhood for men as well as for women will raise, not lower, the ideal of marriage."

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## CHAPTER XII.

### CASTE SYSTEM.

The adherents of Western civilisation condemn the caste-system as an inequitable social system. But in fact neither does it perpetuate inequality nor is it harmful to the society. On the other hand it is really the best mode of establishing equality and the source of immense welfare to the society. Under this system everybody is content with his lot, and perpetuates and improves the skill in his respective sphere of business. It has proved to be a system of universal contentment and peace of mind and has been the cause of moral, spiritual and social progress by the attainment of hereditary skill, and advancement of commerce, industry, agriculture and science. The rapid progress of India in the past in every department of human activity, in agriculture, in fine art, in heroism, in knowledge, and religion which placed it at the pinnacle of glory was due to a great extent to this beneficent social institution.

Without this system people are thrown back upon their own individual resources. As all of them are not equally endowed, the gulf between man and man widens to such an awful extent that some even find it extremely difficult to keep their body and soul together. It is principally to remedy this evil that the caste-system had been devised by the Indian sages, and

not for the purpose of oppressing the lower classes of people. It is based on an understanding of the natural laws of social development, and is meant to facilitate the performance of his proper duty by every member of society while securing to them peace and contentment.

In every country and in every age, the individual passes through four great stages. The first stage embraces the infancy, child-hood and youth—the period of education and service. The second stage is the first-half of his manhood, when he bears the household responsibilities of acquiring wealth and managing domestic affairs. The third stage is the second-half of his manhood when he takes up the national responsibilities, and the fourth stage is the old age when he is the teacher and counsellor of the younger generations. Do not the four castes correspond to the stages of individual evolutions? In the first stage representing the Sudra caste, the responsibilities are few and easy consisting in service. The second caste, the Vaishya has to bear the responsibilities of mercantile life on which depends the social life of a nation. The third the Kshattriya, on whom rests the safety and order of a nation. The fourth and last, the Brahmana, who has outgrown the love of wealth and power and is the disinterested teacher and counsellor of the nation. It is clear that the Indian sages have made the four great universal stages of individual evolution, the foundation of a social polity. The four stages have been represented by four distinct castes. This worked very well towards the good of the nation.

At the present time a man of any caste takes up any occupation and makes no attempt to cultivate the characteristic virtues of his caste, and thus there is much discord instead of that harmony which was so prominent in the golden age of India, though this splendid back-ground of her history still lingers.

The broad dividing lines of classes everywhere follow these lines of caste, the manual labour class are the Sudras. The merchants, bankers, financiers, the organisers of industry are the Vaishyas. The warriors, the executive services, the rulers are the Kshatriyas. And the clergy, the spiritual leaders are the Brahmans. Thus there are four departments in the life of every nation. What a vast amount of good might have been derived if every one worked in his respective class! But every where we find, instead of an organised community moving in harmony with its parts, a chaos, an inextricable confusion resulting from the action of contending individuals.

In the beginning of society man certainly took to activities congenial to his capacity, circumstances and taste. Nobody could have been forced to take up anything against his will. His successors found it easier and more convenient to take up the line of business of their forefathers, and so gradually gained special dexterity in it. It is highly probable that greater skill in any art would be acquired if it is continued in the family from generation to generation. The son becomes acquainted with the activities of his father and has therefore an opportunity of learning them from his very childhood. Qualifications

of the father being naturally transmitted to the son, greater dexterity is acquired in a comparatively shorter time, and the vocation in life being fixed from the beginning, training becomes more definite and decidedly more concentrated as no time is lost for selecting the occupation in life for every individual. There is also no inconvenience or difficulty due to the nature of the work clashing with one's fixed habits. The hereditary skill of the Indian workman could produce the Muslin of Decca or Shawls of Kashmere which had not their equals in the market. The son of a farmer is the best agriculturist, and the son of a palanquin-bearer is the best in his business. The Brahmins have never been beaten in the field of knowledge nor the Kshattriya in martial skill and bravery on account of their permanent and hereditary occupation. It is extremely difficult to attain to the proficiency and dexterity spoken of above unless the training is transmitted from generation to generation. Because in the absence of opportunity of training and of fixity of subject calculated to be most convenient and best suited to him, and also being unable to find out one that is desirable, a man is forced to take up unaccustomed work which goes against his aptitude. In such cases not only dexterity and proficiency are lost, but there arises all the difficulty and hardship of a troublesome and unaccustomed work. Every father brings up his children suitably to his station in life, so that the condition to which one is accustomed from early infancy is never troublesome to him even if it is intrinsically bad.

It is change of condition in life that produces sufferings. For instance, one who has not been accustomed to expose himself to the sun and the rains, and has all along lived a life of ease and comfort will find intolerable sufferings if he be reduced to poverty. But those who are born amidst hardships will hardly find it difficult to bear the changes in the circumstances of their life. Also, the force of habit manifests itself clearly in the particular discomfort and annoyance which a man experiences in adopting himself to altered circumstances of opulence and ease. This is clearly seen in cases where either the individual himself or his son has risen to a superior position in life than they used to occupy previously. They feel a sort of uneasiness and delicacy in adopting themselves to the manners and modes of living of those in higher classes.

In fact the intensity of pain of being lowered from a higher to a lower situation in life is far greater than the intensity of pleasure of being raised from the lower to the higher. Therefore the system which will prevent constant changes of condition amongst the members of society is certainly the best. But if the individuals are left free to take up any work at their will, we cannot avoid frequent changes of conditions with their attendant sufferings. If several agriculturists take up the works of the Brahmins, some of the Brahmins must necessarily be forced to take up other vocations in life. We know that all the different branches of human activities in the world

are necessary for the well-being of society, and that there would be a serious dislocation in the affairs of society if there is any interference with or cessation of any one of these. So that if the agriculturists happen to take up the works of the Brahmins, there would be a disproportionate increase in the number of Brahmins and a corresponding decrease in the number of agriculturists, and some other people must take to agriculture in order that the social equilibrium may not be disturbed. Sufferings due to frequent changes of conditions are inevitable, and people must have got to take up work which they have not the capacity and strength to perform and for which they are not suited by nature and habit, if you have no fixed avocations for different classes in society. The absence of such an arrangement would bring about disease, poverty, disappointment on the one hand, indifference and want of skill on the other. If man keeps to his calling from generation to generation there is no suffering due to frequent changes of conditions and every body can live in peace and plenty by following the calling for which he is fitted by habit. There is no heart-burning on account of better condition having not been attained to, because there can be no suffering or sorrow for want of anything which has not been aspired to or which has not been previously enjoyed. These sufferings arise for want of things which have attraction for us by experience. Therefore the system of fixed hereditary occupation is highly beneficial, and the Indian sages have made it the groundwork of their

social economy as it is natural and highly beneficial as also a mark of civilisation.

But the followers of European civilisation maintain that great mischief is done to the society by the caste-system as it precludes the highly-gifted members of the lower classes from advancement, while the unworthy sons of the higher classes misuse their powers, and on the other hand each class being restricted to its own calling, members of society as a whole are deprived from varied activities, and in fact some are happy for ever, while others suffer throughout their lives. This view is certainly erroneous, for this system never stands in the way of the development of the powers of the gifted nor does it prevent the degradation of the unworthy. Its object is to guard the society from the sufferings due to frequent vicissitudes of life. One really gifted even if born in the lower classes is sure to overcome all difficulties in his way to rise to the fore-front. Even in this caste-ridden country, Kabas became a Rishi (sage) and Mahananda an emperor, although they were Sudras, and Lomeharsan became the expounder of the Puranas in spite of his being born a carpenter, and Bishwamitra born a Kshattriya rose to be a Brahmin. Even if we admit it to be the weak point of the caste-system, we can safely say that it bars the progress of very few indeed, because naturally the child inherits the qualities of its parents, and so cases of highly-gifted man born amidst unfavourable social conditions must necessarily be rare, and therefore the number of people who are thus hindered in their progress are infinitesimally small.



Compared to the benefits that accrue from this system, this evil is a negligible factor and may be safely ignored. On the other hand, without this system the progress of the majority is likely to be retarded, because many upstarts in the lower classes would stand in the way of progress and development of those who are by nature and surroundings fitted for a better position in life. The large number of people who are thus set at large to work out their destiny as best as they can, intrude into the legitimate spheres of activity of other people and are led to invade the homes and happiness of weaker races. Numerous countries and their people have been put to enormous sufferings, and some of them have been totally removed from the face of earth by the workings of such militant civilisation. Should we not then condemn this view as contrary to all sound principles of morals and religions ?

It is never good for every body to take to anything and everything or for all to take up one and the same occupation. It is well-known that a jack of all trades is a master of none. If the caste-system which fixes particular occupations for the separate classes is followed, it gives not only skill and dexterity to the persons following the particular trade or calling, but leaves plenty of time for people to look after other duties of life. With the complication of civilised life no particular individual or class in society is capable of carrying on the various necessary industries and arts, and division of labour becomes inevitable. The Brahmin is devoted to the acquisition of knowledge, the

Kshattriya to fighting for the defence of his country, the cultivator is busy with his work, the weaver with manufacturing cloth and so on. The cultivator never uses up the whole produce of his cultivation himself, nor does the weaver appropriate all his manufactures for his own use, so the Kshattriya does not protect only himself, nor the Brahmin alone is benefitted by his labors in the acquisition of knowledge. Their labors are not meant to benefit themselves alone in the respective spheres of their activities, but they have got to share the fruits of their labours with the rest of the community. The Brahmin takes crops from the cultivator in exchange for his knowledge and *vice versa*. The Brahmin and the cultivator are equally happy and skilled in their respective spheres of activities, so that the Brahmin is not sorry because he cannot cultivate the land himself, nor does the cultivator grieve for not being able to acquire knowledge for himself.

But those who condemn the caste-system would say that the privilege of birth alone upon which this system is based makes it incumbent upon society to respect the ignorant and fallen Brahmin in preference to the most erudite and religious Sudra. This anomaly is a necessary social condition which is present more or less in every civilised community. Witness the respect which the worthless scion of a family of Lords commands in Great Britain. Family history and family glory are the necessary incidents of civilised society and are meant to conserve the peculiar tendencies and to culture

particular faculties with a view to develop the conditions necessary for facilitating the work of gifted individuals who might be born therein. Moreover this respect is shown not only to the Brahmins but to families of other castes as well. If social respect had been dependent upon the perception of qualities alone, there might have been room for difference of opinions in addition to the difficulties in the score of lack of intelligence necessary for the perception of those qualities. The hereditary respect enjoined by the Hindus on the other hand is an act of gratitude and duty on the part of society about which there is not even the possibility of a mistake.

Another evil which is pointed out to discredit the institution of caste is the alleged monopoly of knowledge which is laid at the door of the Brahmins. But is it consistent with fact to accuse the Brahmins of this monopoly? We must say at the onset that the Sudra of ancient days was an individual of such poor intellect as we seldom find in Hindu society, especially in Bengal proper. He was of a class lower than that of agriculturists who ranked as Vaishyas. The flagrant injustice of excluding the Kayasthas of Bengal, for instance, from culture is held out as an example of social evil incident on the caste-system. But they are not as a matter of fact Sudras. Barring these intellectual infants, so to say, of Hindu society, all other castes had the fullest and equal privilege of acquiring knowledge. The Sudras who must have been very small in number in comparison with the total population were excluded,

from acquiring knowledge not out of any selfish motive on the part of the Brahmins, for they could never have been their equal in spite of the fullest opportunity, but only with a view to provide for every class the most congenial sphere of activity. They also were not prohibited from studying the Puranas and other literature which in a popular form gave them all knowledge about God and man, which the Vedas and other sacred books gave to the three higher castes.

Even if it be conceded that there is a difference in the intrinsic worth and pleasure of the present different branches of social activity, we cannot do away with the difference as it is the work of Providence. You cannot obliterate this distinction simply by raising the son of the cultivator to the social status of the Brahmins, or by lowering the son of the Brahmin to the position of the cultivator. Levelling is not equalising, and you cannot maintain equality by inflicting sufferings on the son of the Brahmin because his father was happy. This can only give rise to inequality. Equality is maintained if every one gets opportunities suitable to his nature and education. The same happiness is derived by the poor man when he gets hundreds as does the rich man when he gets millions. Therefore the rule which lays down that the rich and the poor should have a million each is never conducive to equality which consists in giving to each according to his requirements. The law that will mete out the same punishment for the same offence to the rich and the poor, the common people and the gentry, the educated and the

uneducated, is certainly not a rule of equality but of inequality and injustice, for the same sentence does not mean the same punishment to all. The people of the lower grades do not suffer much by imprisonment with hard labor so much as those of the higher grade, because the former are used to hard work. While the higher classes do not so much care for a fine as the lower class. Thus the same sentence for all irrespective of their positions in life, does not necessarily mean the same punishment to them. So the Indo-Aryan scriptures have tried to bring about an equality in punishment by making the sentence confirm to the caste and social position of the culprit. The young men now-a-days are sadly ignorant of the benefits of the old rules and never care to appreciate the profound wisdom hidden in them. The truth of this assertion will be clear if we consider how for certain offences, in the Hindu scriptures, the lower classes are more severely dealt with than the higher, while for other offences the reverse is the case. Manu might be profitably quoted here :

कार्षापणं भवेद्दण्डो यवान्यः प्राक्तनी जनः ।

तत्र राजा भवेद्दण्डो सहस्रमिति धारणा ॥

अष्टापादन्तु शूद्रस्य स्तेये भवति किल्बिषम् ।

षोडशैव तु वैश्यस्य द्वाविंशत् क्षत्रियस्य च ॥

ब्राह्मणस्य चतुःषष्टिः पूर्णं वापि शतं भवेत् ।

द्विगुणा वा चतुःषष्टिस्तद्दोषगुणविद्धि सः ॥

If a crime punishable with fine be committed by a Kshattriya, he will be sentenced to pay thousand times the amount payable by common people. Again learned men committing a crime will be fined more than that ordinarily inflicted according to the following scale :—

A learned Sudra—8 times the usual punishment. A Vaishya—16 times, a Kshattriya 32, and a Brahmin 64 times. If the Brahmin happens to be very learned he may be fined even 128 times the ordinary amount. This is real equality and equity.

Western people say that there is no difference between a Brahmin, a Kshattriya and others. Every one has the same right. Anyone who will show his ability is free to attain the highest position of respectability and the consequent happiness. You are a prince, but in case the son of a cultivator happens to be better endowed than you, you must make room for him. Why should you not, when one better than yourself is available? So that in short it comes to this. That the poorer and weaker people in their helplessness and inferiority should not aspire to happiness, but should retire from the field altogether in favour of the stronger and better ones. So all over Europe, Individualism is being worshipped. It is equality in name only but in reality it is individualism in its most aggressive form. So we find so much parade of the system of competitive examinations there. Examination is necessary for the purpose of finding out the best, worthiest and ablest. Those who are conveniently circumstanced in health, wealth, diligence and influence generally succeed in

competitions. Those lacking in those qualifications have no place in the world. So that the principle working at the root of the Western civilisation is Individualism—the tendency to raise the self regardless of consequences to society—or in other words, the principle of “the survival of the fittest”.

In trying to achieve the end in view, this principle does not take into consideration the death of millions from want or for loss of heart, or it would not care even if the Universe would perish so long as individual progress is uninterrupted and secure. It preaches equality of rights, but in practice it proves that this right is dependent entirely upon the powers and circumstances of the individual. And the preaching is to delude the people with a view to appropriate wealth and comfort by the fortunate few. It preaches Equality meaning thereby that you are my equal so long as you do not injure me or outstrip me in the race for position &c. It preaches Liberty, meaning thereby that I must have a free power and you must not stand against it, and Fraternity, meaning thereby that you are my brother so long as you serve my purpose and help me in securing my aim in view. The prayers of those who are baffled in this warfare of life are silenced by the assertion that they had the same rights and opportunities as well as perfect liberty in everything and they must thank themselves for all the trouble which they have brought upon themselves, that this continuous warfare is the order of nature and there is no help for it. But in fact they are not wholly to blame, man is the slave of circumstances and none

has the power to rise above them. It is clear that in competition the majority must be worsted. Again the evolution of one's power to an extraordinary extent necessarily involves the dwarfing of others' capabilities, because no power come into existence a-new, but only one grows at the cost of another, e. g. to be rich means that wealth must be acquired from others who are thus deprived from its enjoyment. So in order that one might grow strong, many others must be rendered weak and so on.

The merchants of Manchester grow fat the expense of millions of labourers. The farmers grow rich at the cost of so many cultivators. The ruler adds to his exchequer by depriving the subjects of their wealth. One cannot acquire a property without at the same time depriving the previous owner of it. One who is promoted to a situation either displaces the previous incumbent or shatters the hopes of somebody else. Was not the power and glory of Rome and Greece in ancient times acquired by subjugating various other races? In acquiring his present position, the British Lion must have reduced many other nations to the rank of lambs. It is thus clear that no body can make any progress for himself individually without doing harm to others. One cannot be rich without depriving others of their wealth and possession.

No body's expectation of acquiring wealth is ever satisfied. No amount of wealth would bring in contentment and peace to man. If this acquisition of wealth is not well-regulated, the result often is that some acquire vast riches and generally spend them in most unworthy



pursuits, while others are left to struggle with poverty and starvation. So one nation prospers by sucking the life-blood of other nations who are left to mourn over their loss of independence. Some give themselves up to the enjoyments of life in all its aspects, while others have got to labor hard for the bare necessities of life—starvations and disease all the while staring at their face. A spirit of self-aggrandisement never brings happiness to any. The rich and the poor alike are ever busy with thoughts of earning, and there is no time left to them to cultivate the nobler and finer faculties. The high and the low, the intelligent and the fool alike spend their lives in inventing novel ways of earning money and modes of stealing a march over others. Engrossed in thoughts of earning, the acquirer is unable to spend the accumulated wealth usefully, the hoard acquired with so much hard labour does no good either to the individual or his community. Not to speak of entertaining a casual guest, a handful of rice as alms is unavailable at his door. Not to speak of friends and relations, the parents even do not get a share in the wealth. The whole thing is spent in the furtherance of the enjoyments of the man himself and his wife—in dress, in dinners, in ornaments and other embellishments.

On the other hand where the caste-system prevails, the children inherit the nature of their parents and as such they are born with faculties appropriate to the taking up of their father's profession. They receive the required training in that profession from the parents from their childhood, and the constant company and

advice of the father gives great facility and skill to the son in the line of his business, so that one has not got to lose his health by overexertion and over-exercise of the brain, nor has he got to seek the patronage of others or to blunt his humanity with the constant thought of playing false with other people. In fact it gives an opportunity to every one from his very childhood to gain dexterity in the profession of his forefathers and to earn an honest living, while leaving enough of time for the pursuit of science and arts for their own sake. Wealth thus acquired with comfortable ease does not produce that inordinate love of money which compels a man to forget his duties to his neighbours and relations, hospitality and charity, filial and domestic virtues which go to make up man's real nobleness and glory. No body ever interferes with another's profession and no body suffers for want of livelihood as the result of undue competition. On the otherhand every body can earn his livelihood according to his needs and can discharge the necessary duties of life by attaining the essentially human virtues of kindness, devotion, gratitude. The poor and the rich, the intelligent and the fool, the strong and the weak alike have the scope of making the best use of his talents for the betterment of himself and of humanity at large.

A relaxation of the caste-rules in India at the present moment have led men to forsake their hereditary calling and to look always to service as the only means of earning a livelihood. The Brahmins do not care for spiritual

culture, nor do the Kshattriyas take interest in physical culture and in cultivating the science of warfare or the Vaishya in trade and commerce. The ironsmith, the goldsmith, the potter, the weaver, the cultivator have all given up their legitimate occupations and have turned their attention solely to training suited for service so that spirituality, heroism, commerce, art and other necessary factors of social progress have been relegated to the background, and there is an increase in luxury and dishonesty such as was unknown in India before. If the people had followed their respective professions under the caste-system, spirituality and happiness of the nation would have increased along with the material prosperity of India's teeming millions. India has lost her recognised position of glory and eminence in the regions of fine arts and spirituality on account of the laxity of the caste-system, and the only way to make her regain her lost glory is to maintain the ancient divisions of caste in their pristine purity and integrity.

An enquiry into the history of the downfall of India will not be out of place here to show the truth of our assertion. We know it to be fact that India attained to her pinnacle of glory when the integrity of the caste-system was scrupulously maintained, let us now see how she came down from her position of eminence. The rise of Buddhism in India struck at the root of the caste-system. The tenets of that religion as popularly understood generated a morbid pessimism which turned the attention of its followers away from the affairs of the world, and the extinction of human

existence was glorified as the *Sumnum Bonum* of human effort. Large number of ascetics were let loose upon the charity of the people. The Brahmins lost the support of wealthy citizens which was so necessary for providing for them the opportunity and leisure to devote themselves to the acquisition of knowledge. Whatever learning had remained in the country were exhausted in proving the superiority of the new faith or of the old. Internal dissensions and interracial feuds followed in its wake. Though after a time Hinduism regained its hold upon the people of India, foreign invasions did their havoc before it could be restored to its full vigour. The influence of Buddhism had worked for a disruption of the country and its literature, and had left some permanent vestiges of its mode of thought and practice in the country which it would have taken ages completely to efface. The preaching and writing of sacred books by Buddhistic sages in the vernacular of the country inaugurated a practice, which was extensively imitated by latter-day Hinduism and proved a death-blow to the cause of that Sanskrit learning which could have cemented the different provinces into a feeling of unity and solidarity. The result was disastrous. India fell a victim to foreign invasions and for want of a king to enforce her ancient rules and of effective social control, she began systematically to lose her ancient institutions one after the other till she is reduced to a down-trodden country whose people are unworthy to call themselves the successors of that mighty civilisation which was at once the earliest and the best.

It may be said that supposing the following of ancestral profession to be very advantageous, what harm is there in inter-dining and inter-marriage amongst the different castes? Marriage between men and women of the same caste is likely to produce more harmony in married life. As love and friendship depend on the community of feelings and similarity in life, the greater the difference in conditions, the wider is the gulf between the minds of men. The outer condition and the constitution of the minds of men of the same class are generally of the same type, that is to say, their occupation being the same, their hopes, their aims and aspirations, their modes of life are almost identical. So it is more probable that there would be better harmony between them. Besides in case of marriage between members of the same class, the habits of each make one fit for helping the other in the works and duties of life—a potter's wife can help him in making pots, for she has got the necessary training while living with her father, a weaver's wife can similarly help her husband in weaving cloth and so on. But if the weaver marries a potter's daughter she cannot be of much use to him in his work. The relations by marriage also if they belong to different classes, cannot help each other materially. But if the relations belong to the same class, they might render material help which is not available in the other case. Similarly there is the likelihood of better understanding and sympathy between the rich and the poor of the same class. Another advantage is that the father and the mother of the same class beget children who inherit such faculties as are

calculated to give them more skill and dexterity in their hereditary profession. The capabilities and aptitudes of the children by such marriage are doubled because those of the father and the mother are joined together in their production. Thus marriage amongst members of the same class is highly advantageous and conducive to the welfare of humanity.

Let us see if there is any advantage to confine interdining to members of the same class only. In ancient days there was no caste system in any country. Later on when castes were formed according to profession, it was arranged that the profession only should be hereditary. At that time intermarriage and interdining between the members of different castes had not been prohibited. In India there were only four castes in ancient times—the Brahman, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Sudra. Their professions were different, but intermarriage and interdining were not prohibited amongst them. Subsequently marriage and dining were strictly confined to members of the same class only when the advantages of this system were fully realised by society. To us it seems that the principal cause of this prohibition is the social control for punishing transgressions of the social rules. For time immemorial the rule of excommunicating any wrong-doer obtains in this country. No body dines with him, no body gives away his daughter in marriage to him. Even now many factions are formed in this country owing to this rule being followed. Almost all the castes in this country at the present moment are mixed, and the source of the

mixed castes is the anti-social conduct of certain individual of the original castes. So that interdining having first been stopped with the individuals who had misconducted themselves in this matter, gradually the prohibition of interdining has been extended to whole classes. You cannot condemn a practice which owes its origin to the attempt of society to check wrongdoing. Again, men entertain the friends and relations at the time of festivities the relations are all confined to the same class, so that the dining must perforce be limited to that particular class only. The Brahmin is always the highest caste, so all people take food from him. But the Brahmin never takes food from another lower in position. Thus when in course of time the taking of food became the indication of higher position in society, interdining amongst classes was absolutely prohibited.

Under this system every man has some power over the members of his class, and even the most indigent has some control over the conduct of the rich ; for if the poor man refuses to dine with the rich man on the ground of some social misconduct of the latter, society takes the side of the former and leaves the rich man severely alone.

Thus the most mighty and powerful in the society must live in amity with the poorest of his class and the rights of the rich and the poor are equalised. If this dining affair had not depended on social considerations, then, as in the Western countries, the rich would have entertained only the rich, and the poor only

the poor, and the latter would have been provided with no handle to bring their influence to bear on the rich. This system moreover provides a ready means for the poorer members of each class to share in the culture and better modes of living of the higher class and this preserves the social equilibrium and amity which are so necessary for man. Under this system one is compelled to invite alike the rich and the poor, the fool and the intelligent of his class, and thus the poor and the foolish have a chance of coming in intercourse with the wealthy and the intelligent in the matter of dinner, conversation and company. The attention and hospitality they receive make them strive after better manners and modes of living, and the difference between the various strata of society is considerably minimised. That is why all classes of Indian society irrespective of their wealth and position, are equally charitable and equally respectful to their parents, equally hospitable, religious and dutiful, while in the Western world, the poor classes are unfit for civilised society and are not much superior in morals and manners to the primitive savage.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS DUTIES.

We have already said that we should so perform our duties as not to interfere with the legitimate functions of others. The question naturally arises, how is this balance of functions to be maintained and why should people be inclined to maintain this balance? If you cannot convince men that this equilibrium of functions is essential to their welfare, why should they ignore their own interests or follow the path of morality at the sacrifice of the pleasure of satisfying their own desires. The effects of the same actions are, under certain circumstances, good; while under a different set of circumstances they are bad. So that it is impossible to determine the morality or propriety of actions from their effects alone.

The moralists maintain that men have to suffer even in this life on account of their failure to follow the path of rectitude. Do we not see however that all men do not so suffer, and also that those who follow the path of morality do suffer, while those who lead an immoral life enjoy the pleasures of life? Why should people be inclined to sacrifice their pleasures by putting their faith upon the moral rules which are but the creations of men? Moreover no man can consistently, follow the moral or *Sashtric* injunctions without being habituated to the course of conduct thus enjoined. It is not at all easy to control the natural passions and

emotions when they are aroused, and practice from early childhood can alone train a man to ignore and to subdue his natural cravings. Consider again, why should parents and teachers have the hearts to inflict pain upon their children and pupils by following the rules of morality if they had the sanction of the approbation of men alone? Those that have no faith in a life after death, and the pains of hell, such as are depicted in the scriptures, can be moved only by the pleasures and pains of this world. Experience belies the assumptions of the moralists that all immoral actions are painful, for do they not see, under their very eyes, the best of men suffering from difficulties and privations, while the worst characters are in the enjoyment of all the pleasures of life? If you try to enforce moral rules upon your children by the pleasures and pains of this life alone, they will perceive the utter futility of that sanction as they grow in years and may be tempted to desert the path of rectitude. If on the other hand you enforce them by the sanction of the Shastras, no one can have the courage to violate them for they know not what pleasures or pains await them in the life to come, and these unascertained pleasures and pains cannot fail to have their desired effect. The injunctions of the Shastras therefore are the most potent means of making men follow the path of duty and no other means are sufficient for the purpose. But it may be objected that religious sanction is a pure myth which plays upon the credulity of men. This objection however would legitimately end on the utter

negation of any means for the preservation of men and society. Religion is the only thing which has been devised by God to preserve humanity, and without it men would be wanting in that providential care which even the lower animals enjoy. For the lower animals have got in their instinct the providential arrangement which unerringly leads to a course of action that is essential for the performance of their duties. Men have not the good fortune to possess even these natural instincts, and if God has not provided for them definite rules of conduct which they can know and follow, their destiny is surely unbearable. Why should men of all animals be deprived of God's care and providence? Without religion man would be more dangerous than even the lower animals. For in the natural tendencies and habits of these animals, we have the surest indications of their characters, man's constitution on the other hand is essentially heterogeneous, for he is a curious admixture of divinity and brutality. It would thus have been difficult to put any faith in any man, for who knows that in the very next moment his carnal nature would not assert itself and make him dangerous alike to his neighbours and to his race. When we see therefore that religion is the only natural means for the preservation of men and society, when we see further that human society has in the past been preserved and maintained by the injunctions of religion alone, we must admit that religious injunction is the only natural and providential arrangement.

The above inference is supported also by the

observation of nature and nature's laws. As we ascend in the scale of intelligence, more complicated natural arrangements are perceived. As a matter of fact, the greater the intelligence of the animal concerned, the more elaborate is the process required for its proper development. Witness the difference in the physical development of animals produced from eggs and the mammals—those have their nourishment readymade for them in the shells in which they are confined, whereas these must be fed with the breast of their mothers. The one arrangement is as much natural as the other, and we have every reason to infer from this analogy that although the lower animals are preserved and sustained by their natural instincts, man and human society must depend for their preservation upon the training which the religious scriptures supply. The mammals require to be fed with their mothers' milk before they can acquire the strength necessary for finding out their own food, and man must acquire the knowledge contained in the scriptures and must strengthen by practice before they can acquire the necessary sense of right and wrong for the performance of their duty. We can possibly have no doubt that the scriptures are devised by God himself for the preservation and development of humanity. They might not have been put to writing by God personally in the ordinary way, but proclaimed and expressed through the agency of great human souls who from time to time appear in the world, for the welfare of human society.

This conclusion must, perforce, be admitted even by those who do not admit that our only duty is to exercise

the powers given to us by God. For they also agree in thinking that there are beneficial and detrimental actions. In the absence therefore of unerring instincts as in the case of lower animals, which invariably lead man to those actions alone which are beneficial to his interests, we must admit that his Creator has provided for him some means for knowing the right from the wrong. Scriptures alone provide this means ready-made for him and the universal belief in their utility and the practical proof of their use afforded to us by the progress of humanity at large in all climes and countries conclusively establish their Divine origin. The only other means, which has been postulated by some great moralists, consists in the faculty of conscience which, according to them, provides for man an instinctive sense of right and wrong. We have already tried to establish that there is no such faculty in man, and that even if there were, the existence of it would reduce humanity to the level of the lower animals ; for man, in that case, could not claim that superiority which pre-eminently makes him the highest object of creation.

But it is objected by some modern thinkers that the scriptures take away man's inherent independence for he is obliged to follow the scriptural injunctions against his own sense of right and wrong. The authority of the scriptures, therefore, is an extraneous force which compels his obedience and is thus inconsistent with his natural independence. This leads us naturally to a consideration of man's real independence and such a consideration unmistakeably points to the

conclusion that the scriptures, instead of taking away the independence of man, establish it on a sound basis. The autonomy which is real rather than illusory, is the autonomy of the self in us. Our independence does not consist in following our passing inclinations which differ in individuals according to their training and intelligence. The self in us transcends the thoughts and emotions of the time, which deriving their motive force from the self do not express or exhaust it. Should we say that the man who is led away by a passing fit of anger is more independent than he who controls it? The truly independent man is he who follows the dictates of his sense of right and wrong. When we see therefore that the scriptures enjoin only such actions as are dictated by the enlightened seers and saints, what ground can we possibly have for branding them with the ignominy of crippling man's essential independence? They may be inconsistent with the wilfulness of the ignorant and the wicked; but are not the independence of such men being controlled and destroyed at every step by social and political laws? Do we not put the criminals to jail and put every obstacles, by means of social disapprobation, in the way of those who for the sake of self-aggrandisement oppress their neighbours?

The doubts that naturally arise about the Divine origin of the scriptures, are (1) why should then there be different scriptures for the followers of different religions, and (2) if all are not equally God-given, how to select those which are really so?

Variety is the order of nature, and just as we find various kinds of men and animals on the face of the earth, we find various scriptures also. The powerful king, the erudite Pandit, the exquisite singer, are but men equally with the most ugly and unintelligent savage. As these differ from each other most materially in their modes of living, their habits, customs and dress, there is a corresponding difference in their scriptures also. As a matter of fact as different nations do not agree in their modes of lives and activities, their religious notions and activities must necessarily be different. The difference in the scriptures owes its origin to the same Divine foresight and providence which has ordained different modes of life and activity for different men and animals, according to the nature of their constitutions and habits. The duties and religious practices of persons must differ with their capacities : Such is the will of God and to fulfil this wish, He sent the *Rishis* to promulgate the religion for the Hindūs just as He sent Christ and Mahomet to promulgate the religion of their respective followers. We can thus possibly have no difficulty in believing every scripture to be divine and true. This does not necessarily imply an exclusiveness such as we actually find amongst the followers of different religions. For, why should not there be the same tendency towards unification amidst the different systems of religion, which is the sure indication of an advancement of knowledge in every other field of activity ?

In the year 1893 a Parliament of Religions was held

at Chicago. This was the first attempt of its kind in the Western world to study the great religions of humanity with a spirit of impartiality and reverence. The attempt was no doubt very creditable, but it must not be lost sight of that at a gathering of religious representatives in the West, where there is one predominant faith, Christianity, there is a very little chance of comparing it with other older religions. A convention of religion held in India, where we have all sorts of different systems, will be conducive of good effects.

Every religious system has three departments :—

(1) the strictly theological portion, (2) the portion dealing with morals, and (3) that dealing with practice. A detailed examination of each of these three departments will make it clear that the precepts of the different scriptures, instead of being conflicting with each other, are harmonious and uniform.

*First as to theology*—Every system of religion believes in one God who is Infinite and Absolute—who is the Creator of the universe, and the worship of whom is the supreme end of all human activities. The nature of this All-pervading and Universal spirit is described in almost the same terms in the teachings of every religion, the Vedanta of Hinduism, the Rahasya teachings of Buddhism, the Gnosis of Christianity and the Tasawwuf of Islamism. What the Islamic Kalema faith declare “La illah ilallah”. “There is no other creator than the one God,” the Upanishads say of it सच्चिं खलु इदं ब्रह्म, अहम् ब्रह्मसमि, “All this is Brahman. I am That,” also, the Christianity teaches that “I and my Father are



one". These religious systems also believe in the revelation of scriptures and prescribe appropriate sanctions for the performance of human duties. There may be differences as regards the nature of the God-head in the different religions as also in the system of worship ; but there is no essential difference in the fundamental principles and ideas. As regards the revelation of the scriptures, it must be said that no one believes that God Himself wrote out the scriptures in the ordinary way by pen and ink, but that these scriptures were revealed through the pure intelligence of saints and seers.

The religious practices also are fundamentally the same, although there are differences in details. Every system of religion aims at the communion of man with God, although it might prescribe different means for the establishment of that communion. The much-abused image-worship does not lose sight of the fundamental nature of the Divine principle, for as the Hindu theologian says : the image is simply a device for making the object of worship, who is in every case the Supreme Governor and Creator of the universe, more definite and attractive. The ultimate end of all worship from the grossest fetichism to the conception of an Universal Self, permeating, enlivening and transcending all name and form, is the supreme beatification of merging the individual consciousness into the universal.

*Next as to morals.*—There is no fundamental difference in the essential moral rules promulgated by the different religions. All religions teach us to feel love for all in the shape of reverence, sympathy, tenderness and pity. All

other virtues flow from these. All systems of religion, for instance, will agree in saying that to speak the truth is our duty, and that doing injury to others is wrong. But there is one matter which needs consideration, namely, that all rules are but general statements which require modifications according to time, place and circumstances. Thus although it is undeniable that to speak the truth is our bounden duty, if a creditor presses me for payment tomorrow, and I tell that I shall pay him after a week, but in the meantime, I am in a position to pay, and I may pay my creditor within the week. Strictly speaking this may be falsehood, but it does no harm to any body, and so does not clash with my duty to speak the truth. So that it becomes necessary to formulate special rules to meet the exigencies of time, place, and circumstances, and these special rules only prove the fundamental moral principles by way of exceptions. Then again we have certain passions and emotions which as a general rule, can be arranged as pairs of opposites, the former of which are vicious while the latter are virtuous, e.g. anger and forgiveness, hate and love, &c. But it must be remembered that all human emotions and tendencies have their legitimate fields of actions, and it would be altogether against the behests of nature to extirpate totally any one of these. The aim of the moralist, therefore, should be to so adjust these emotions as to confine them within their legitimate bounds, and thus to secure that balance of natural forces in which our perfection consists.

It is the absence of these special moral rules

which makes certain systems altogether unfit for regulating the conduct of men in all departments of activity. The followers of these religions find themselves obliged to go against the general principles under peculiar circumstances, and the occasional violation of these rules gradually lead them to loose all faith in their utility. The noble renunciation contained in Christ's advice "if a man asks for your coat, let him have your cloak also" "if a man smite you on your right cheek, turn to him your left also," may fittingly point out the path of duty to an ascetic who has renounced the world, but is hardly consistent with the position of an ordinary man in the world, living in society. In practice, therefore, we find the Christian world entirely ignoring Christ's advice and acting entirely against it. It must be remembered however, that the natural tendency of man is selfish, and it becomes necessary for infant societies to be reminded always of the great general rules, till they attain that stage of intelligence which enables them to determinate the circumstances calling for the application of special rules.

*Finally, as to the practical aspect of religions.*—This differs in the various religions, but this difference depends more in the psycho-physical requirements of the different people inhabiting different countries—in the special rites, ceremonies and special directions for the conduct of life. Even amidst the varieties of ritual, there are certain general principles underlying all schemes, as the sacraments connected with birth,

marriage and death—ante-natal, post natal and post mortem, and the purpose of these rituals is the same in every religion. In every religion there are also laid down rules of social and domestic polity to a greater or lesser extent for men of different temperaments and in different stages of life. We may say at once that this practical aspect is the peculiarity of the Hindu religion. His religion to a Hindu is not like his holiday garb to be put on at special occasions, but is something which regulates the minutest details of his life. Elaborate rules regulating his conduct at every step have been laid down in the *Shastras*, and a Hindu cannot move an inch without following or violating the commands of his own religion. The practices thus enjoined, are not in any way antagonistic to the principles of other religions, but on the other hand, only enforce and ensure the performances of those duties which are universally recognised as right and proper. Thus the Hindu learns to respect his superiors from early enforcement of obedience upon the junior members of the family. The joint-family system curbs the natural selfishness of man and accustoms him, in the most agreeable manner possible, to live for others. The numerous religious ceremonies which his *Shastras* oblige him to perform, accustom him to a life of devotion and renunciation, such as volumes of moral precepts would not have produced. The practice of his religion must perforce make him continent in food, in drink, in dress, in fact in everything which pertains to his life on earth. Marriage to a Hindu is

not an institution for the satisfaction of his private\* inclination, which you may call by the name of love, but a religious duty for the discharge of the heavy obligations, he owes to his parents and to his society. In his earnings, the Hindu must necessarily respect the legitimate claims of others; and there is not that self-aggrandisement which is the necessary result of the domination of capital over labour. In his expenditure, too, the Hindu is restricted and controlled by the injunctions of his religion to spend more for others than for his own personal comfort, for does not his scripture say. "He eats sin who cooks for himself alone"? From his early infancy he undergoes a system of training which must necessarily produce in him, love for his God—love for his teacher—love for his brother—love for his consort—love for his children—love for his country—love for humanity; in fact love for every thing that has life. His universal love flows towards the whole world, and that selfish love, which respects only the wife or the children, is wholly unknown to him—he cannot love as he likes but must love as he is enjoined to do by his parents, his teachers, his society and his religion. Finally, the restrictions and guidance of the *Shastras* lead him step by step to that life of renunciation which, to the Hindu, is the highest happiness and the end and aim of his existence; for as the scripture says,

न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शस्यति ।

हविषा कृण्वन्मयं भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥

• "No desire can be satisfied by enjoyment, for that only intensifies it like the ghee ( clarified butter ) poured into a burning fire."

• This brief survey of the essential tenets of the different religions makes it abundantly clear that there is no fundamental difference in the teachings of different religions, but that each tries in its own way to secure the moral and spiritual developement of its votaries, according to time, place and circumstances.

• We shall now try to show the importance of the Hindu religious system. The peculiarity which marks it out as a religion pre-eminently fitted for all grades and shades of intellect of varying spiritual development, is that in it we find systems of thought and practice suitable to all classes of human beings. It is undeniable that in every society and, specially so, amidst the totality of human beings, there must necessarily be persons of different degrees of intellectual, moral and spiritual progress ; and in order to provide for all you must have a system of religion, which ensures the satisfaction of the religious cravings of all these different classes of people. That is exactly what you find in the Hindu religion ; for in it, you find tenets which are agreeable to the grossest fetich worshipper, just as you find others that the highest monotheist finds it difficult to grasp and comprehend fully. Another peculiarity of the Hindu religion is its thorough-going Catholicism and entire absence of proselytism.

• Every religion in the world claims that unless man follows its tenets, he acts against God, and that it is the

one faith which has been given to man by God—all the others being either erroneous or partial statements of truth. The Christians say that there is no salvation except through Christ. But the Christian faith has not spread over the whole world, nor did Christ or his religion exist before the last 1900 years. How is then salvation to come to those born before Christ, or to those good and honest people who live in countries where the Christian religion has not yet spread? Is God intent on saving only a few men, while the others are to be doomed to everlasting perdition for no fault of theirs? Is He the God of a few only or of all? The strictly Christian view cannot commend itself to any unbiassed mind and we can leave it here.

The Brahmos hold that there is no Salvation unless man accepts their faith. According to the Mahomedans, unless one seeks his refuge in Mahomet he is doomed. So it is found that every religion arrogates to itself a monopoly of the Divine favor. This, to say the least about them, is an unwarrantable narrowness in these religions, which debases our ideas of Divine justice and mercy. But turn to the Hindu religion and see on what broad foundation it bases its teachings.

रुचीनां वेचिचारादङ्कुटिल नानापथयज्ञेषां

नृणां सिकी गम्यस्त्वमसि पयसामर्णव इव ।

“Verily” says the Hindu sage, “as the different rivers and watercourses wend their way through different countries and climes into the one ocean, so do the different religions point to one goal who is God Himself”. So men whatever forms they might believe in and

whatever views they might profess in worshipping God, finally reach to God—to Him there is no difference of clime, age, condition or caste, for He loves everybody irrespective of his caste or of his creed.

But the Hindu sages have, for the sake of convenience, held that every one should follow his ancestral faith rather than seek for others. The principal cause of it is that the sages of each country have given out such teachings about God and man as are best suited to the circumstances of that country and its people. The savages have very little power of comprehension so their method of worshipping God is simple. But for the enlightened consciousness of deep thinkers, a different system of worship is necessary. Meat and wine are not necessary in India as they might be in England, on the other hand, there is reason to think that they are positively harmful here. So according to the nature and circumstances of the country, one thing may be necessary for one but not so for another. Thus also the duty of one may be positively sinful for another. Besides as there can be no steadiness if religion is frequently changed, the Indian sages have said

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥

“Better one’s own Dharma though destitute of merit than the Dharma of another, well-discharged. Better death in the discharge of one’s own Dharma, the Dharma of another is full of danger”.

The Indian sages realised that God does not



belong to any particular individual, country, race or age, for His mercy flows to all, irrespective of caste, color, age or circumstances. To him all are equal, and even the atheist is not outside the pale of his love. He favors equally the most civilised man and the darkest savage who has absolutely no conception of the Divine. It impossible that he has fixed a definite system and mode of worshipping Him, and has not arranged to communicate it to all men. That is why the Aryan sages, to whom the truth of the universality of God had been revealed, said that all religions are true and sanctioned by God, and that each of them shows the way that leads to salvation. He cares not whether you address Him in this language or that, whether you utter your prayer correctly or not, provided there is the all-important devotion at the bottom. Keshab Chandra Sen had based his New Dispensation on the teachings of the Aryan sages. His Dispensation is not at all new but as ancient as the old world. In all scriptures of India we find the ideal is intimately mixed up and every Indian heart is full of that ideal. There is no religion so liberal as Hinduism, and the real truth about God was clearly revealed to the Indo-Aryan sages.

The only religion in the world which has preached toleration is the Hindu religion, because it acknowledges no single prophet, and the Hindus believe in the underlying truths of the various schools of religion. They acknowledge the saying सत्यमेव जयते नादृतम्—Truth only conquers, not untruth. Nothing exists without truth. Had there been no truth at its bottom, how

could any school of religion exercise its influence over the hearts and minds of people? "Quakery gives birth to nothing, gives death to all things".

All the different forms of religious sects of the Hindus have one single aim to serve, the search for God in all His aspects. "The Hindu religion gives to the rustic and to the Rishi, in their diverse evolutionary proportion, just the same aspiration towards God which each deserves to have. One law, one system, one code for votaries is not the Shibboleth of the Sanatana Dharma. So many minds, so many modes of worship. In the subtle and sublime philosophy of Adwaitism, a peasant will hardly find spiritual solace, to him his Indra and the Maruts with a prospect of a good harvest, are objects of fascination; but for a Patanjala or a Kapila of ripe experiences, grapplings with the sphinx of human life in many incarnations, have made them fit to realise the ideal and to idealise the real. Herein lies the chief merit of this admirable faith of Aryavarta."

Here lies the distinguishing feature of Hinduism which makes it the highest of all religions. One may convince himself of the truth of this assertion by a comparative study of other religions. Hindu religion goes by the name of the ever-existent Faith (सनातन धर्म), and is not named after any personality such as Buddhism, Christianity or Mahomedanism. Hinduism is not the property or creation of any particular individual. It comes through the inspirations of innumerable sages and wise men. Hinduism is not like Christianity which accepts nothing but what Christ, has said, or like

Mohomedanism, which rejects everything that has not come through Mohomet. It has most gladly welcomed all spiritual truths of any value. No religion can claim the promulgation of new ideas such as are not to be found in the Hindu religion. It has exhaustively dealt with and taught all sorts and shades of dualistic and monistic conceptions, the immortality of the soul, the life after death, and all other ideas necessary for the uplifting of humanity in its different stages of growth. In no other religion of the world could be found such universal and multifarious teachings adopted to the different stages of mankind, and that is why it has wonderfully stood the test of time. Buddhism converted half the population of the world to its faith, but it could not conquer Hinduism; it has withstood successfully against the manifold oppressions of Mohomedanism and the attempts of Christianity. In fact none on the face of this world could do any mischief to it. Sometimes the foolish youths of this country unaware of the mighty truths contained in their own religion, and fascinated by the external polish of foreign faiths, are misled to accept them, but this is simply a result of their ignorance about their own religion.

No faith is so ancient as Hinduism. It has baffled all attempts at its annihilation because it stands on a solid basis. It will stand in all its majestic glory when all other religions will have disappeared from this world. It is not without reason that it is called the सनातन धर्म, the un-dying religion. Those who denounce the

\*Hindus as image-worshippers have not known anything about mysteries or about the worship of God. Far from being an elaborate system of idolatory, Hinduism is the only religion which is rather free from it. All other forms of religion also are idolatorous. Some few hundred years ago, there was the universal use of pictures and images in connection with worship throughout Christendom. The Reformation was directed greatly against the use of images. "In visiting the old cathedrals, traces of attacks of the Puritans are constantly found in the mutilation or destruction of the images on the outside walls, but inside, the images are everywhere reappearing." The Hebrew and the Mohomedanism are strongly opposed to the use of images. But the Jew have their holy places and the ark, the symbol of deity. The Musalman always worships with his face towards Mecca and has the only holy thing "the blackstone of Mecca" to which his thoughts ever turn and to which his pilgrimages are made. Thus in every case we find that there is a craving for some palpable object upon which the mind may be fixed, and we find the consideration of the true use of images as something which may stimulate imagination, something around which the thoughts can gather. Idolatory consist in attributing human qualities to God, but unless that is done, there can be no worship of God at all, and the ordinary ideas of virtue and vice being indissolubly connected with the sanction of rewards and punishments, an anthropomorphic conception becomes a necessity of thought for the majority of human beings,

and that is why, when the sages found that the highest conception regarding Brahman must necessarily be limited to the exceptionally few, they imagined God as endowed with all the noblest human attributes.

चिन्मयस्याद्वितीयस्य निःकलस्याशरीरिणः ।

उपासकानां कार्यार्थं ब्रह्मणोरूप कल्पना ।

रूपस्थानां देवतानां पुंस्त्रांशादिक कल्पना ॥

The attribution of forms to Brahman, who is pure consciousness, the One without a second, Holy and Formless, as also the conception of numerous Gods, males and females, as partial embodiments of the Divine Substance, are but imaginations necessary for the facility of the act of worship. Moreover, the prayers offered to Him also have a form, a clothing of words, or a feeling clothed in words. The words die in a moment but the feeling remains. Therefore when we cannot dispense with this idolatorous form of worship through words, we must not find fault with image-worship. Mind cannot work without forms. As the photograph of an absent friend intensifies our thought, the image used in religious worship concentrates the mind on the deity we worship.

In fact there could not possibly have been so much intensity of religious feeling in the world except for idolatry, and the wide-spread spirituality in India owes its origin to an enlightened system of image-worship. The Indian mind is so much full of devotion to God that he attributes every action to Him. He remembers God before he begins any work. Even before writing a letter he would begin it with the name of God. The

fruits of religious actions also are dedicated to God. The worshipper of images derives a pure bliss through meditation even a hundredth part of which is denied to the worshipper of the Formless. When the heart of the Hindu bows in devotion to his worshipped ideal, when he takes his food with the idea that it is what has been left to him by his God, when he offers all his sufferings and sorrows at the lotus-feet of his God, and prays for strength and guidance to bear them, he enjoys a bliss, a hope and a power that cannot be expressed in words. And you, our Indian youths, if you have not been a very early victim of unbelief, you must remember the hope and the strength that must have been yours in the happy days of your childhood when you bowed before a Divine image. Have you ever found anything like it? So do not hate image-worship. Man will have freed himself from all ideas of God when it will take its leave of the world. So don't discard image-worship, if you deem that worship of God gives you happiness, or if you recognise the purity and necessity of spiritual emotions.

Apart from a religious point, History gives us a lesson which shows how the warfare against the worship of images did mischief to the fine Arts. The Reformation and the Puritans destroyed the images found in the cathedrals in Europe, and Arts suffered as a result. In the Hebrew law, the use of images are prohibited anywhere and not merely in connection with religion. The result has been the total destruction of Arts amongst the Jews.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### CONCLUSION.

History amply proves the antiquity of that civilization which made India the most advanced country on the face of the earth, in prosperity, and in spirituality. The social institutions, which were devised by its great thinkers to make the fruit of that civilization permanent, have indelibly left their impressions upon the people of the country; but the life that vivified them, the thought that permeated them have, by continued subjugation and want of initiative, been long forgotten by those who live amidst those institutions. The high philosophy and spiritual grandeur which still survive in the literature of the country, have for centuries uniformly attracted the admiration of all honest scholars, Indian and foreign. But the training which facilitated the spread of that knowledge—the life which supplied the clue to its interpretation—have long been lost to the country, never perhaps to come back. Various forces have been at work to cause a disruption of the old order of things, without supplying something better in its place. The training of its best youths in modes of thinking, altogether foreign to the ideals of the old civilization of the country has sapped the foundation of that civilization. The destructive activity

of several decades has done its work and fulfilled its purpose. Time has come for the stock-taking of our ancient store-house. Signs are already manifest of an attempt to understand, and if possible to revivify the ancient civilization. The preceding pages are intended to help my countrymen in that noble attempt, and it remains for the world to judge how far I have succeeded. Suffice it to say, for my justification, that I have tried, in my own humble way, to understand and to help others to understand, the dignity and purpose of the ancient thoughts and the ancient institutions of India.

It must be remembered that no country can progress without an attempt to keep in touch with its past. Progress implies a continuation of the past into the present, and of the present into the future. The frantic efforts, therefore, of those who tried to remodel the country altogether by transplanting the ideals and institutions of a different civilization into the soil of India, cannot be for the country's real good. The people have already come to realize it. A spirit of nationality, a sense of dignity and self-confidence are essential for man's real advancement ; and those who would condemn everything indigenous as foolish, and imitate everything foreign as laudable, are the worst enemies of the country's progress. Far be it from my intention to pander to national vanity. This is all that I want to say : Adopt everything good that you find in other countries, but adopt it to the ideals of your national life, condemn not your national ideas simply because they are national, but try to understand them and



to enter into their spirit. Assimilate only what is good and wholesome in the new order, and retain what is best in the old.

In order to develop and improve, a nation must maintain its integrity and individuality ; and the only means of maintaining that integrity and individuality is uniformity in religion, in language, and in national customs.

The true cause of the downfall of a nation lies in the exhaustion of its hope and purpose. When the minds of people are in a state of stagnation, they cannot work well. The downfall of India may be attributed to the same cause. Her children ceased to admire anything, or take interest in any mundane affair, when they had climbed to the highest pinnacle of glory, and then they flung themselves into inaction and apathy, and they succumbed easily to the foreign invasions. But now when India is in communion with the progressing world, there are signs enough that she will awake from her present torpor. The land which once gave birth to the Bhagabad-Gita, the land which brought forth the two time-honored religions. Hinduism and Buddhism—which satisfy the cravings of the hearts of people inhabiting about two-thirds of the populated world—will shake off her present lassitude, and will rise again. India now sorely stands in need of a love for all, the Atmic identity, as laid down in her Shastras. Her children have lost everything consequent on foreign invasions and the only heirloom that has been left is their religion, to which they have clung with

an admirable tenacity. Among the diverse systems of religion in India, still now, the people unanimously venerate a saint or a sage. It does not matter if he is of a low caste, or of a different religion, but he is adored by all in the same spirit. It is through religion, therefore, that India can be welded into a solid whole. Let, then, our young men put aside all ideas of antagonism in religion, and learn to feel that all religions are but revelations of the same truth, and let them try to understand and culture the universal love which characterised their fore-fathers.

Language serves to bring people closer and a common medium of communication of thoughts serve to bring about a harmony. India's regeneration also lies in imparting education by and through the medium of her old Sanskrit language. Lastly, the intrinsic value of a nation lies in the moral character of its people. The Huguenots of France lost all their possessions, they were banished from their homes, but they grew prosperous because they carried with them their faith. Let our boys learn to maintain the integrity of the soul. Let them keep in mind that with faith comes hope, and when these two are joined together, outcomes charity, which is Love—the feeling of universal brother-hood. Let them always remember the saying of the Lord, "Never doth anyone, who worketh righteousness, tread the path of woe."

Again you cannot secure the progress of the country by isolating yourself in the attainment of individual advancement. You can ameliorate its

condition only by working in co-operation with the teeming millions of its population ; and co-operation is impossible without sympathy and mutual confidence. If you begin your work of reform with the assumption that your people and their ideals are foolish and unreasonable, you are sure to generate in them a sense of distrust and contempt which would make co-operation impossible.

I can not help reproducing here the words of one who has given much thought on the regeneration of India.

"There is very little doubt of her awakening from her present torpor, but when so many difficulties are to be faced, and so many stumbling blocks are to be surmounted we must not anticipate, even in these days of hurry and rush, to make her all that she once was, even in a generation or two. Nature's mills grind slowly, sometimes vexatiously slowly, and we must wait long for the results. India's crying need at this present moment is a large crop of devoted children of her own, to feed her, to nourish her and if need be, to die for her. Busy lips are not so useful as warm sympathetic hearts. Let not the changes in her social constitution be too sudden and sweeping. She understands right well now where the wound festers, and she is anxious to heal it by applications of the common sense that is yet so rare."

"Work through her religion, operate on her through her faith, and she is insolubly one, in every part and every limb of her huge body. On the day of the birth of the

Lord of Brindavan how will every Hindu, be he a Brahman, Kshatriya or Panchama, be one at heart in singing His glories, from Kinchinganga to Kania Kumari ! What does this indicate ? That the basic principle of that by which India can be welded into a solid whole is religion. Are not the northern Kabir and Kamal the property of the children of the eastern, western and southern parts of India ? Are not Tulsi Das and his *Rāmāyana* honoured almost as one of the *Vedas* throughout her length and breadth ? This is why we say that they who are longing to see an undivided India, an India with peace at home and peace abroad, must try to understand her innate characteristics."

"She cannot be won to move as a unit by politics, by socialism, by utilitarianism, by economics, not even by patriotism, not by iconoclasm, not by the slavish imitation of the West, not by radicalism, not by the preachings of her foreign suzerains, but she can be symmetrical, systematic and delightfully harmonious, if you tell her that "The Great Lord sleepeth in the heart of every sentient being." She is united as an ardent votary of the Mahāvākya, "Tat Tvam Asi." Beyond the bounds of religion there never *was*, never *will be*, and never *is* a regeneration for her. If you want to save her, save her by this means" ;

"An individual becomes divine by purity, so does a family, a community, a nation, and, expanding still our observation, we may say that humanity will sink or rise according as righteousness sinks or rises therein. Nation after nation has been weighed in the balance

and each that was found wanting, had to give way to another, put on probation to try whether it will succumb to the worship of the things of the flesh. No nation has come to prosperity by chance, it is the inner life that has determined its fate."

"Hinduism lives still amongst us because of the truth lingering in it. When the entire Hindu community makes common cause by and through religion, Indian nationality will not be far to seek. The Hindustan of the Hindus must be soldered, in the parts where there are fissures of apathy and dislike between sects, by the cement of Sanatana Dharma, and then the followers of other faiths will not hesitate to call themselves—by reason of centuries of residence and vested interests—Indian, more than Moslem, Zoroastrian, or Buddhist."

One word with regard to the scheme of the book. In an age which arrogantly boasts of its rationalism, it is impossible to justify the old order of things without an appeal to reason. I have therefore thought it fit to show the inherent reasonableness of ancient institutions of India, and to prove that the fundamental intellectual, moral and spiritual conceptions, peculiar to this country, are based on essential rationality. It may be that in appealing to reason, I might have, at places, overshot the mark; but the sympathetic reader should always remember that this is due simply to an attempt fairly and accurately to sum up the opposite view. I should also warn my readers against the supposition that I want or attempt to give a higher place to reason in preference to authority. On the

other hand, it is my sincere conviction that the highest place must always be assigned to the authority of scriptures and seers in all matters pertaining to man's innermost nature. The rationalistic view therefore, as set forth in this little book, is an attempt to maintain the supremacy of authority consistently with the prevailing spirit of the age.

This little book does not pretend to claim an originality with regard to the fundamental conceptions, which it has tried to establish and to justify. Those conceptions are as old as Indian civilization itself, and are to be found in the different books which that civilization has left to the world. My part has been to justify and to defend rather than to invent. Speaking as a Hindu and a Brahmin, I can not conscientiously say that such a justification is at all necessary and important, but the spirit of the times has necessitated this mode of treatment. I should be happy if my feeble attempt helps even a single individual to re-establish his faith, in the wisdom of his fore-fathers and the ancient sages of his country.

So, little book ! I send you on to the world with all your failings and short-comings, to offer your helping hand, however feeble it may be, to all struggling souls, trying to re-affirm the ancient wisdom, and I offer the praise or the blame of this undertaking at the lotus feet of that Innermost Being who lives in the heart of the small as well as the great.

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